THE ART OF
Kingdom Come
Deliverance
II
WARHORSE

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Kingdom Come Deliverance II

XZONE WARHORSE

Warhorse Studios

Creative Director
Dan Vávra

Art Director
Viktor Höschl

Historic Consultants
Joanna Nowak
Petr Bouška

Foreword
Dan Vávra

Afterword
Martin Klíma

Texts
Joanna Nowak
Filip Štorch
Richard Malatinský
Vladimír Mareček
Štěpán Pavíza
Jolana Tichá
Petr Bouška
Lukáš Komárek

Featured artists
Arash Beshkooh
Pavel Beskyd
Petr Bouška
Michaela Burcaková
Vít Burda
Konstantinos Chtenelis
Tomáš Duchek
Vladimír Bedřich Dvořák
Pavla Ferstová
Marcos Geymonat
Pierre Hanneuse
Rafael Michael Hayduk
Jiří Horáček
Michal Hoz
Viktor Höschl
Krzysztof Kajura
Mariya Kapustyan
Jan Kastner
Kumi Kawatani
Antonín Kolman
Lukáš Komárek
Barbora Kotoul
Martin Kotoul
Nils Emil Tobias Krantz
Tomáš Križan
Adam Kruták
Vadim Kudrin
Daria Kudrina
Paweł Kurowski
Ryan Lindsay
Joanna Nowak
Anna Pačesová
Jozef Pavelka
Mikuláš Podprocký
Václav Prchlík
Arash Radkia
David Simon
Guillem Lagunas Solà
Pavel Statkevich
Petr Šroubek
Filip Štorch
Miriam Šťastná
Thuy Tien Tranová
Milan Vavroň
Jonáš Zavacký
Vít Zemek

Cover art
João Ruas

DTP
Filip Štorch
Lukáš Komárek
Thuy Tien Tranová
Vít Zemek

Producer
Ondřej Sobola

Xzone

Jan Bobrovský
Pavel Skoták

DTP
Petra Hochmannová

Localisation
Michal Vojkůvka
Anna Jelínková
Pavel Skoták

Print
Finidr s.r.o.

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Foreword

In 2011, when we founded Warhorse, one of the key roles we needed to fill was the one of a concept artist. They are where it all begins. They are the ones who visualize the director's and screenwriters' ideas for everyone else, and it is from their sketches and digital designs that the entire game is created.

However, concept art as such was still in its infancy in Czechia at the time. When working on the first Mafia, I often drew the location designs for the graphic designers as I am also a trained artist. We also had the huge advantage of creating something for which there were plenty of references, photos, films and documentaries. No one had to draw pictures of cars and American skyscrapers, all we had to do was photograph them.

Working on Kingdom Come: Deliverance, the art was a much bigger problem. We were trying to reconstruct something that has predominantly already disappeared and records of what it looked like are very inaccurate and sporadic. Therefore, we needed a team of people who were not only excellent artists but also knowledgeable about medieval architecture, period fashion and the practical functions of armor. And such people were as good as nonexistent. Our art schools don't produce dozens of top-notch hyperrealists every year, and even if they did, there might not actually be anyone to employ them.

I've also struggled with this during previous projects where I approached a number of young creators completely outside the game industry, and then brought a few of them to Warhorse. Namely Mikuláš Podprocký, a genius of many talents, who became the art director. Next was Štěpán Janík, who had worked with me on the never-released High Tech. Also Jiří Světínský, who worked on Mafia II and created, I think, the first artwork for Warhorse – a knight on a warhorse in the midst of a battle for a presentation I gave to the investors.

Gradually, we hired other, mostly young and often inexperienced talents, who grew into great artists in Warhorse. During the development of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, our concept art team increased in number to almost 20 people under the leadership of the great Viktor Höschl.

What concept artists do is often a very fiddly job. They can't just let their imaginations run wild. They must adhere to historical facts. When they create a design for a location, they follow the terrain map and the look of the period architecture precisely. When designing the look of a character, they must have perfect knowledge of medieval fashion, down to such details as how to fasten belts, what colours of fabric were common at the time, and what social classes they were appropriate for. In addition, some artists learned to create replicas of medieval illuminations and maps, while others helped to create the places they had designed directly in the game engine. And let's not even talk about the user interface, which contains thousands of icons of various items, skills, stats and perks, and each icon is a small work of art in itself.

It's also worth mentioning that many of the things you can do in Kingdom Come: Deliverance today can easily be found online. Especially on YouTube, where you can find pretty much everything. But back in 2011, when the first game was being developed, this was far from the case, and finding sources for a lot of things was a much bigger problem than it is today. We spent a lot more time in libraries and archives back then. Even today, we still work with dozens of experts and consultants, and our work still starts with researching the game's locations on-site. Know that all of this has not been easy. Together, we spent hundreds of hours discussing every detail of each illustration, down to the level of color shades (that health bar is too saturated!) or the thickness of the lines in the UI (that contour line is too thick and casts a shadow on the wrong side!).

What you will see in this book is just a small sample, literally a fragment of the monumental masterpiece that has been created over the years for the purposes of the game. I think this book is a great piece of work, and I hope you enjoy it!

Daniel Vávra

Game Environment

It's been only a few weeks since our hero, Henry, witnessed the burning of his home village and vowed to avenge his parents. Yet, he's already experienced enough adventures to last a lifetime. Henry has matured, and his journey intertwines with events that will shape history. The innocence of spring is gone. A scorching summer has arrived in the lands of the Bohemian Crown. Blossoms have faded, fruits are ripening, meadows are bursting with colour, and golden fields shimmer under the sun.

The developers at Warhorse Studios faced the daunting task of creating a nearly 20-square-kilometer world where nature feels alive. Across two distinct maps, they had to depict the landscape in unprecedented detail.

Though the game is set in real locations, translating them into a virtual world presented numerous challenges. Since 1403, the landscape has changed dramatically in the amount of vegetation, the extent of roads and watercourses. Some locations had to be scaled differently. These deviations, however, allow for better placement of key locations, ensuring that new discoveries unfold naturally alongside the story, keeping players engaged with every horizon they cross.

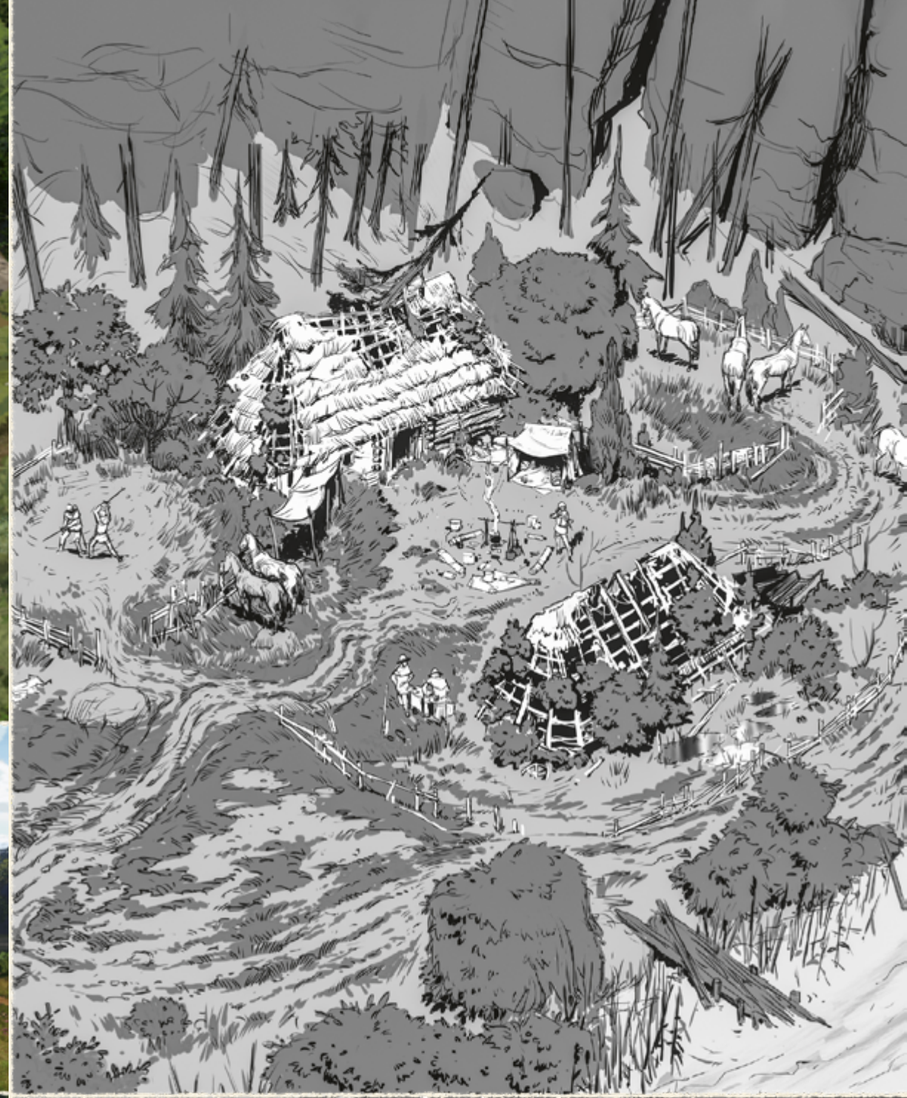
Bohemian Paradise

The vast region known as Bohemian Paradise is considered one of the most beautiful areas in the Czech Republic. Its charm is defined by its iconic sandstone formations with steep and rugged ridges, towering cliffs and labyrinthine rock formations. In the Middle Ages, this was a vital region crisscrossed by trade routes and dotted with fortresses, castles, and strongholds on nearly every hill. The most dominant of these is Trosky Castle, from which the entire Troskowitz region takes its name.

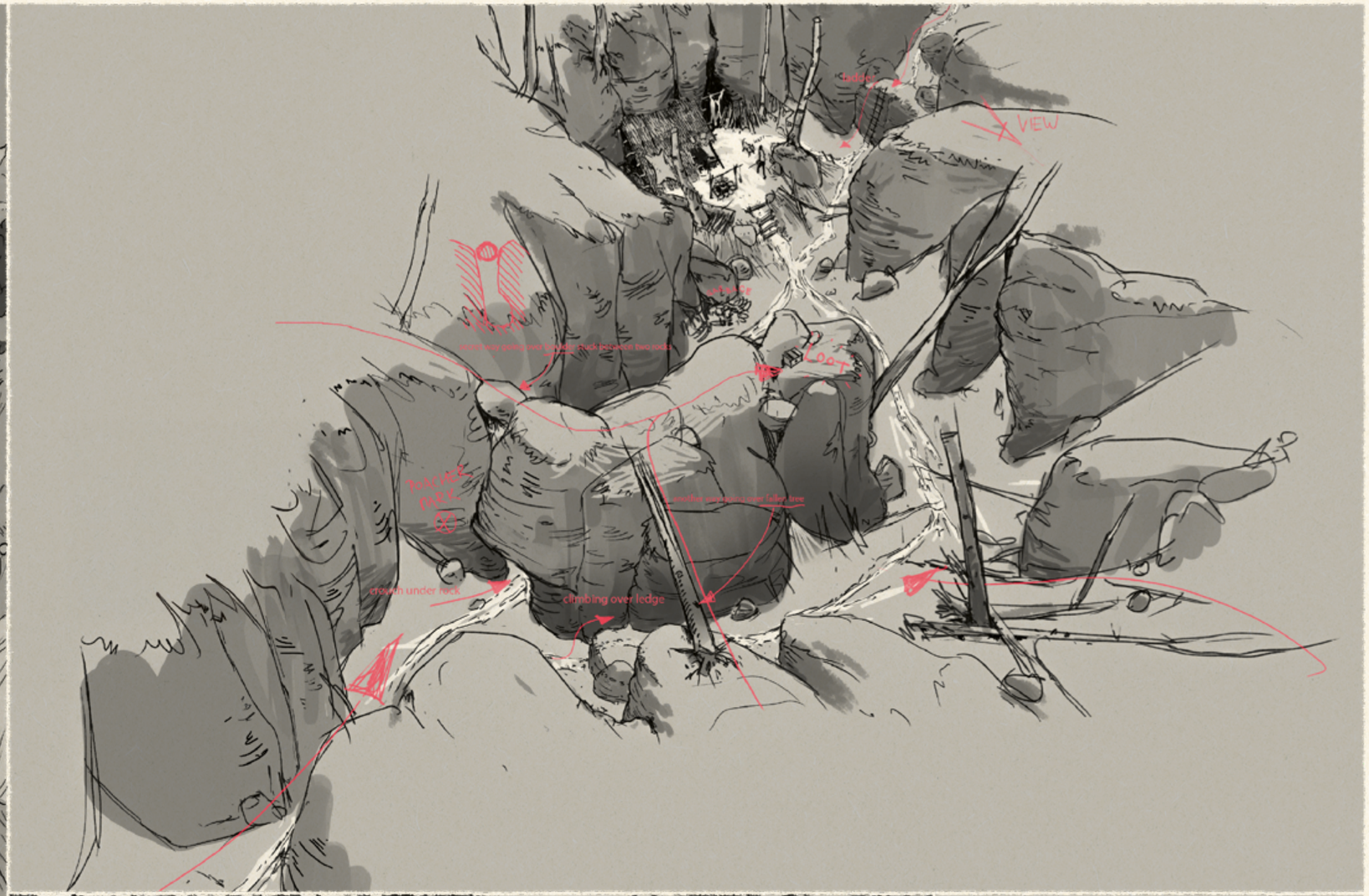
The Landscape's Mood

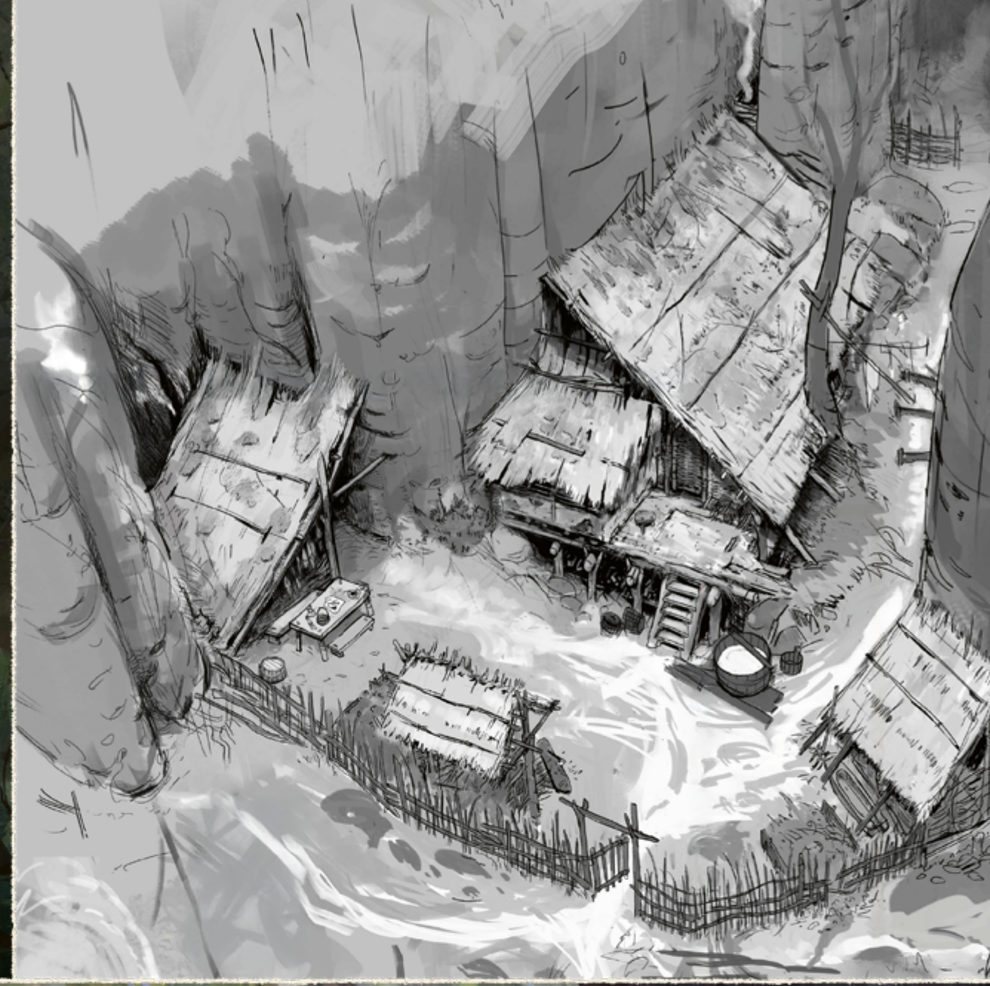
Bohemian Paradise is a land of striking diversity thanks to its size. From water-soaked meadows, riparian forests, and pine groves surrounding rock formations to high-perched beech forests and volcanic hills that served as ideal building sites for fortresses. The Troskowitz region's meadows are rich with rare plant species, and they remain a source of various medicinal herbs. Scattered among the fields and forests are ponds, peat bogs and fens – hallmarks of the Troskowitz region. This enchanting Troskowitz landscape easily captivates players, immersing them in a time of relative peace in the area. Idyllic views stretch over lakes and meandering rivers, secluded cottages, fishermen's shelters, and the ever-turning mill wheels. Towering slender cliffs and dense forests rise proudly above it all. Castles perch atop the surrounding hills, where nobles once surveyed their vast estates. In the distance, a caravan clatters through the countryside accompanied by birdsong as the sun lazily climbs over the horizon. Its rays pierce the fine mist hovering over the marshes. But the thickening summer air signals a change – a thunderstorm is approaching...

A silent witness to Henry's journey, Rocktower Pond plays a role early in the game. Its long shores are alive with activity – shouting soldiers, songs drifting over the water from campfires. Most notably, the watchful "Rocky" oversees all sorts of fateful encounters that may alter history. The game's opening is a crucial moment in development. Every player experiences it, and it sets the tone for the rest of the game's graphics and atmosphere. Designing this introduction required a setting that met the demands of game design, immersion, and visual storytelling. The concept of Capon's troop camp therefore evolved over time. The idea that began as a grand ruin or shelter was refined into a minimalist campsite. Simple, yet seamlessly integrated into the natural surroundings.



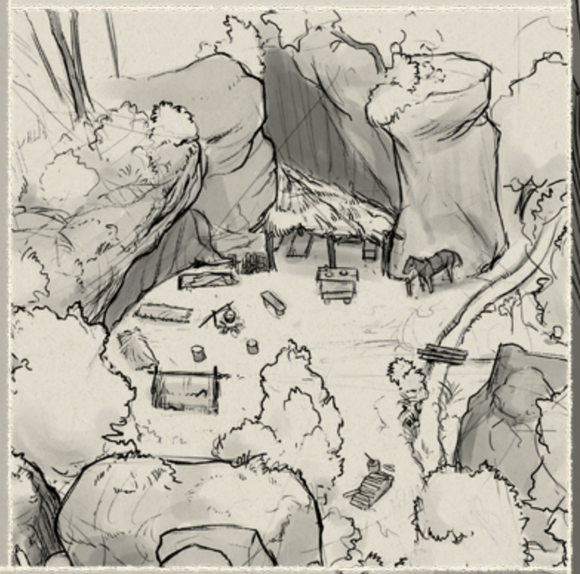
The dramatic rock formations of Bohemian Paradise are remnants of an ancient seabed. Over time, sedimentary deposits transformed into soft rock, which cracked as the sea receded. Erosion then deepened and carved these fractures into towering sandstone spires and steep rock walls. What may seem like a romantic-looking rock maze can quickly become a deadly trap. The winding paths that initially guide the player soon twist into an impenetrable labyrinth. The Apolena labyrinth is a nod to its Cretan counterpart. Though no mythical creature lurks at its centre, its shadowy passageways conceal hidden dangers.

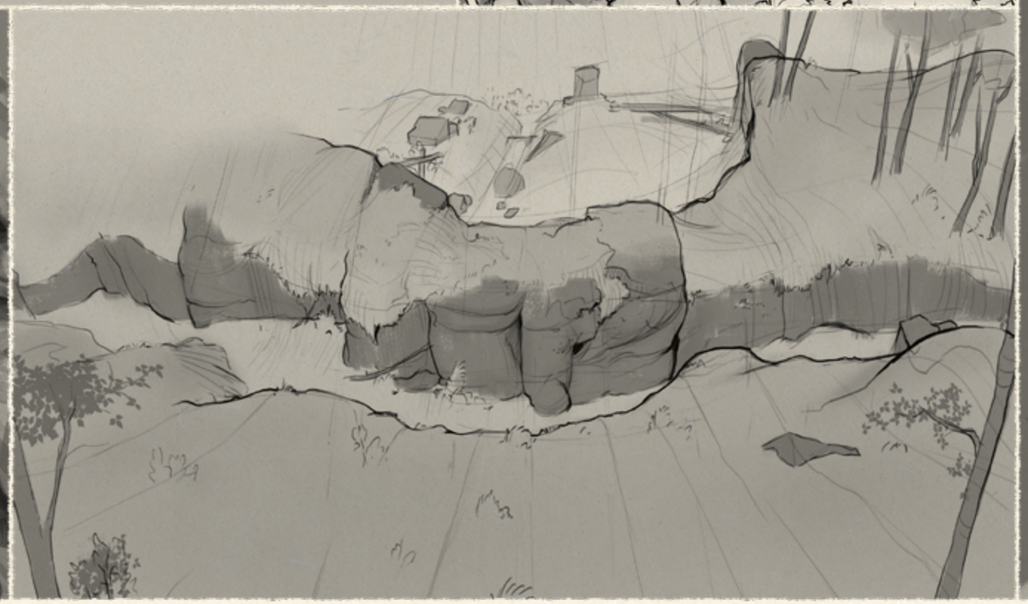

VIEW
LOOT
climbing over ledge



ONLY WAY-IN

SIDE SCHEMA





Land of Silver

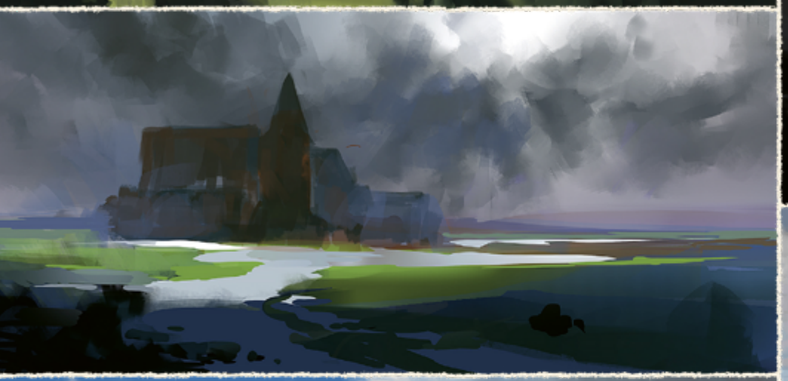
Kuttenberg, a city of silver. A gleaming treasure of the region which links the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands with the Sasau Valley. This vast land invites curious adventurers to prehistoric sites filled with ancient bones and creatures – perhaps even dragons. The region is also rich in medieval monuments, including churches from the era when silver mining flourished, bringing prosperity to the land.

The Landscape's Mood

The region around Kuttenberg used to be a mining hub crisscrossed by countless trade routes. Along these paths stood mills, forges, and foundries built primarily to process silver. Even today, the remnants of their activity can still be found in the Bach River Valley.

To keep such an operation running, countless villages, both small and large, emerged around it, serving as supply hubs for Kuttenberg and nearby Kolin, thanks to their farmlands and livestock. Despite the almost romantic aura of medieval villages, the retreat of nature in favor of industry is evident. As a result, the number of people in cities and on the roads increases, which, of course, attracts various criminals.

Even during the earliest stages of design and concept making, it was important to distinguish the Kuttenberg region from the Troskowitz area. The goal was to depict a land repeatedly ravaged by armies that plundered nearby villages and fortresses. Sieges came at a cost, and so it is possible to see the consequences of war everywhere around: destroyed houses and roofs, trampled ground, and also scorched and flattened grass wherever military camps once stood.



The landscape around Kuttenberg stands in stark contrast to Bohemian Paradise. Its flat terrain, devoid of shade and distinctive features, is emphasized by the absence of deep forests that fell victim to the expanding civilization. From a game design perspective, such a flat expanse is not ideal for an open world, so we sought ways to keep the landscape both engaging and authentic. Nature was given a somewhat more gentle character. Vast fields are broken up by small groves and coppiced forests, offering shelter from the wind and at least partial relief from the sun. Months after the raids, nature is slowly beginning to recover. The silver mines remain, but not all are active. Some await their time, while others have long since been abandoned.

Common Folk

A visit to the medieval world is not just a stroll through picturesque landscapes or a superficial glimpse into the past. A true journey into history is, above all, an opportunity to understand how society functioned back then – its customs, values, and unwritten rules. It's all these ordinary people who shape the present moment, influence the mood of the world, and directly affect the experiences and future of our hero. After all, Henry himself has spent most of his life as a commoner. The people of a medieval village were bound together by core values, such as faith in God, loyalty to the Bohemian Kingdom, and respect for their ancestors. These and other pillars of everyday life are revealed through conversations with merchants and farmers, by observing laborers at work, or by helping the locals resolve their disputes and struggles. The reward might be a simple one: an invitation into someone's home, a warm meal, or perhaps even a place to sleep for the night.

Gold and silver were rare luxuries for most, unless they supplied goods to a town or castle. Books were just as scarce as there was little time for deep contemplation. The most pressing concerns were securing enough food, having a roof over one's head, and fulfilling one's duties to both their lord and God. But that doesn't mean people didn't find joy in life. They still made time for village festivities, sipping ale in the shade of an apple tree, or slipping away for a romantic moonlit rendezvous.

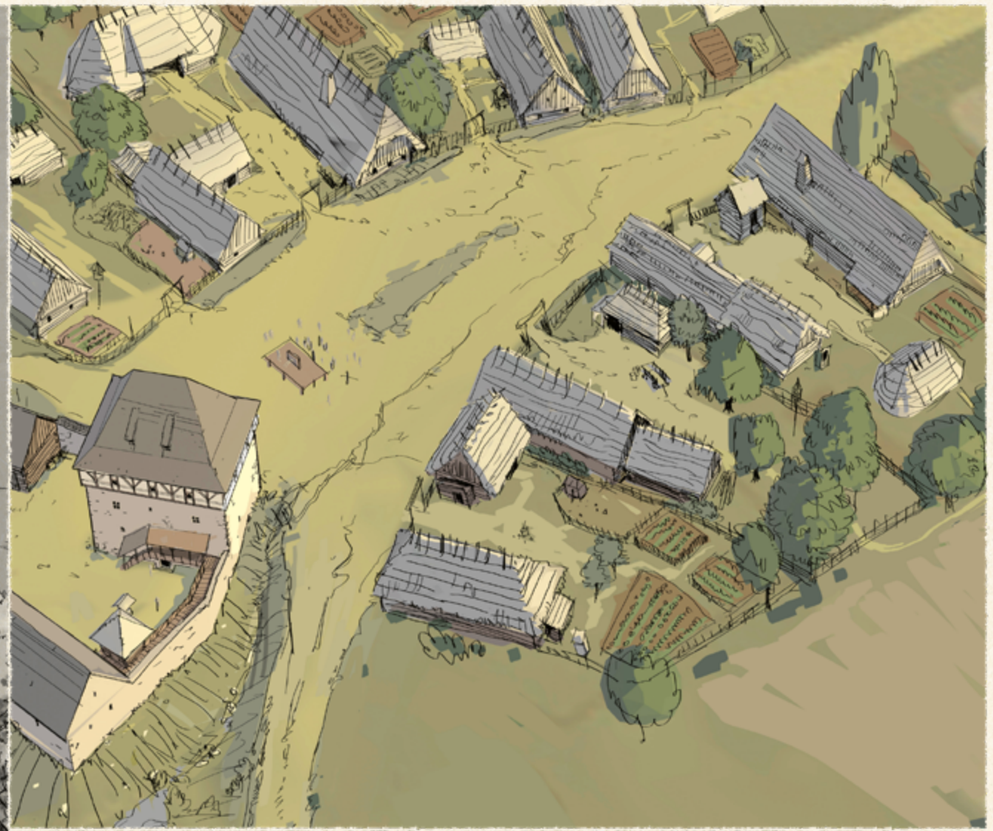
II

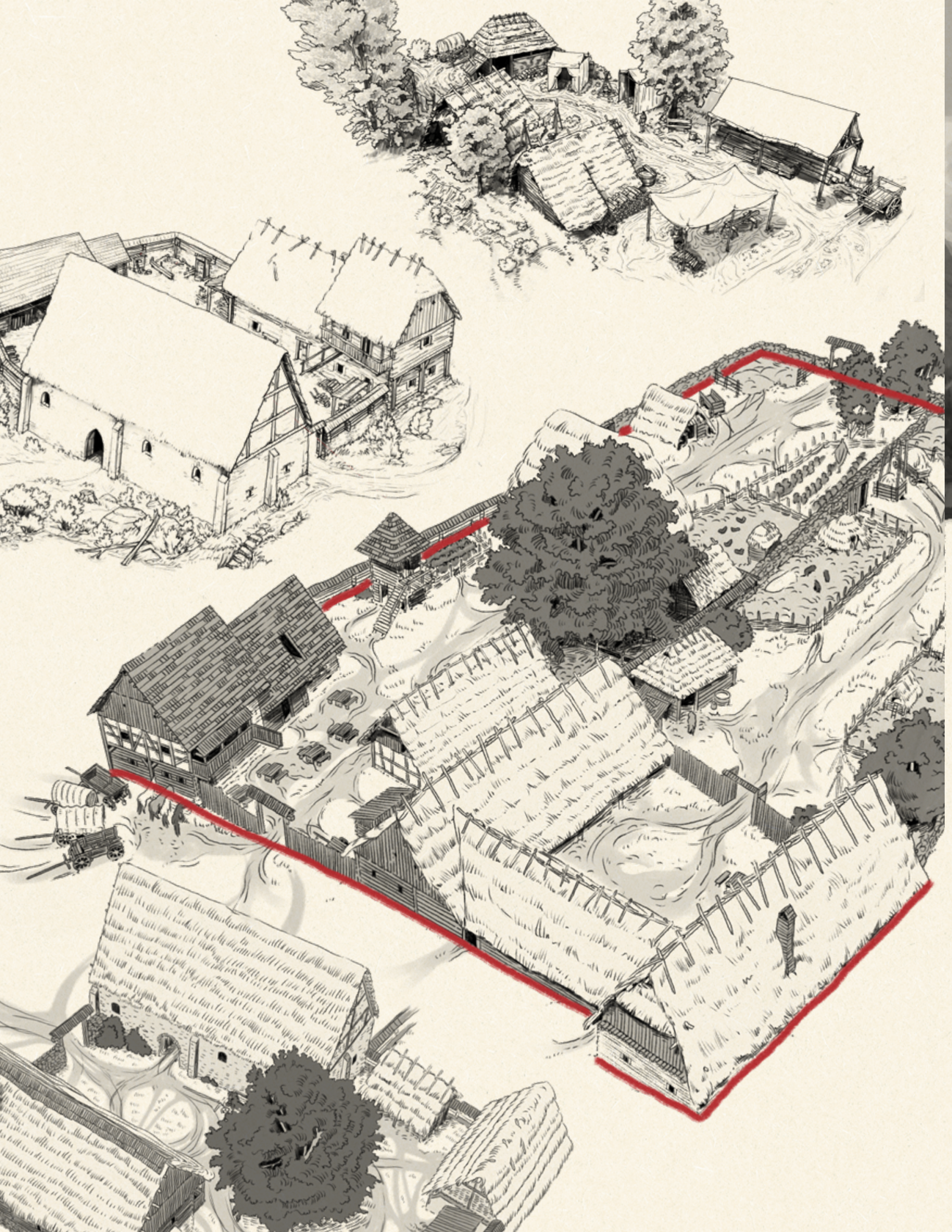
Glimpses of Everyday Life

In towns, forests, and across vast stretches of farmland. Just as life in the Middle Ages could be monotonous, it was undoubtedly diverse as well.

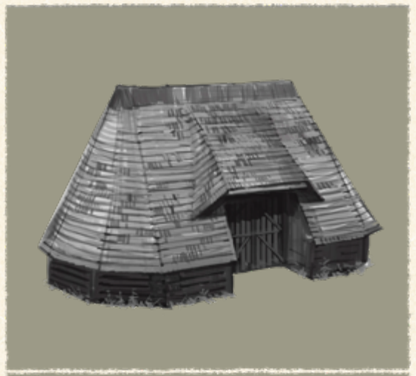
Its diversity lay in the many different ways people made their living – and in the various efforts they undertook to ease that livelihood. As always, wealth and location played a crucial role in determining the fate of an ordinary member of medieval society.

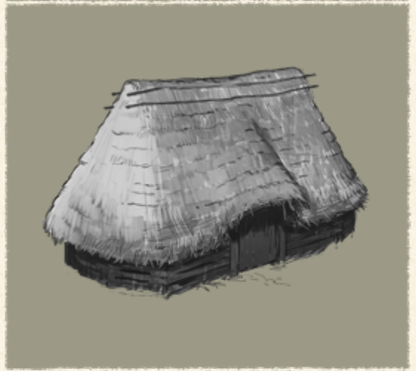
For many inhabitants of medieval Europe, everyday life unfolded in the village. The foundation was agricultural land. Each homestead and farmyard was tied to a designated plot of land, and together with various utility buildings, these formed the structure of the village. Working the fields and tending to animals kept many hands busy, while crafts, trade, and hospitality also flourished in rural communities. A village wasn't built on a cleared, leveled plain. It had to coexist with the wild nature around it. It had to adapt, becoming a part of the landscape. As time passed and the village grew, it was shaped by natural disasters as well as periods of prosperity. This entire history was etched into the collapsed roofs, winding paths and fences, overgrown sheds, and creaky barns. This organic character is something many can imagine. But expressing it in a game environment is a complex task. That's why no village in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II looks exactly as it was initially designed. Over the years, they have evolved gradually, just as real villages would. Many buildings were demolished or constructed. The land changed as well. Some areas became verdant meadows, while others were cleared. Flowerbeds, enclosures, and stone walls appeared and disappeared again. Some parts of the village acquired the patina of time, while other houses seemed to still smell of fresh wood. Modifications were made every time the flow of village life revealed an awkward corner or poorly placed turn. And so, the appearance of each village matured, becoming increasingly unique.

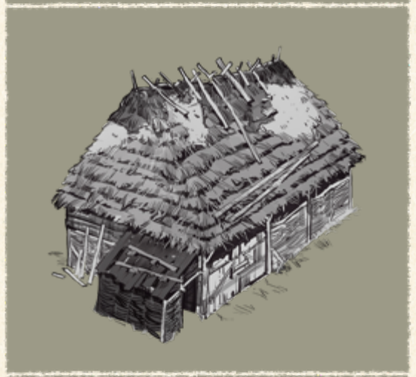




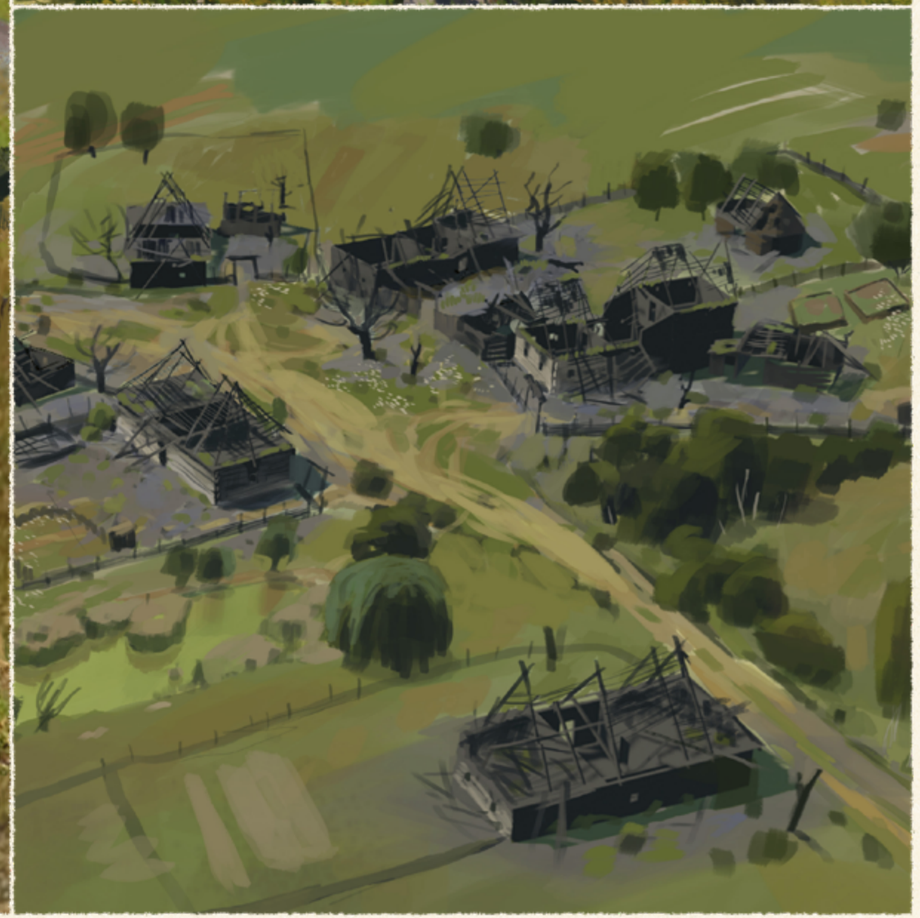
A medieval house is rarely a solitary structure. Therefore, the basic unit of a village is not a single home, but a homestead or courtyard. Villagers had to be self-sufficient, which led to the construction of various outbuildings, which, especially those providing shelter for animals, had more durable construction than the human dwellings. Other buildings and additions included chicken coops, drying racks, granaries, waste pits, barns, pigsties, and vegetable beds.







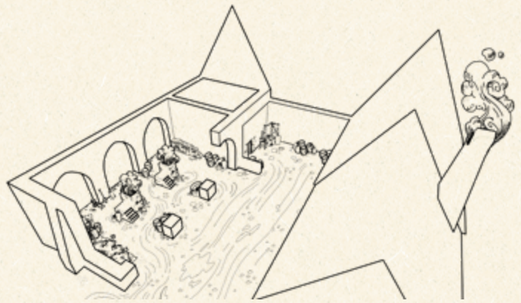
As the creative team began shaping the vision of the villages, it became necessary to decide what to fill them with. Unlike the first game, where buildings were assembled from modular construction sets, many of the structures in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II had to be modeled uniquely. Each village was divided into various types of buildings according to their purpose, and multiple variations were created for each type. Eachmodel then underwent an accelerated architectural process, from early sketches to basic 3D blockouts, plastering designs, and patina.

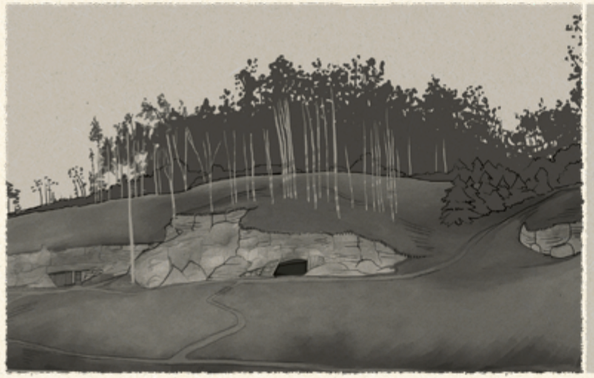


Crafts

Even in the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance, professions and side activities played a vital role. Watching skilled craftsmen at work from a distance is one thing, but becoming one of them? That's something else entirely. That's why we wanted to introduce an even wider range of trades and professions for Henry to explore during his downtime, while giving him a chance to step away from politics and immerse himself in the everyday rhythm of medieval life. At the same time, we aimed to offer players a variety of hands-on activities that let them experience the magic of historical technologies. This includes not only working with natural materials but also participating in local industry and commerce within the regions.

The profession of a gunsmith was not only physically demanding, it was also incredibly dangerous. From the very first visit to the hidden powder mill, players learn just how complex the production of gunpowder was, as well as the challenges of transporting projectiles safely. Even the proper use of early firearms required intense concentration. The outcome of many battles depended on whether one side had firearms, in what quantity, and how quickly and precisely they could reload.





Kingdom Come: Deliverance II wouldn't be complete without an expanded and revitalized blacksmithing system. Beyond basic equipment, we've broadened the range of items players can order from a blacksmith or even forge and repair themselves. The difference between a modest forge in a village or beneath a castle and a grand city workshop is immediately apparent.

The royal city became a hub of activity and culture. It offered opportunities for trades that would have little use in the countryside. One such profession was, without a doubt, tailoring. While most capable women could mend a torn linen cloth or sew simple garments, crafting elegant, fashionable clothing according to a specific cut while using expensive imported fabrics and threads and adjusting the fit to the wearer required a truly professional touch.

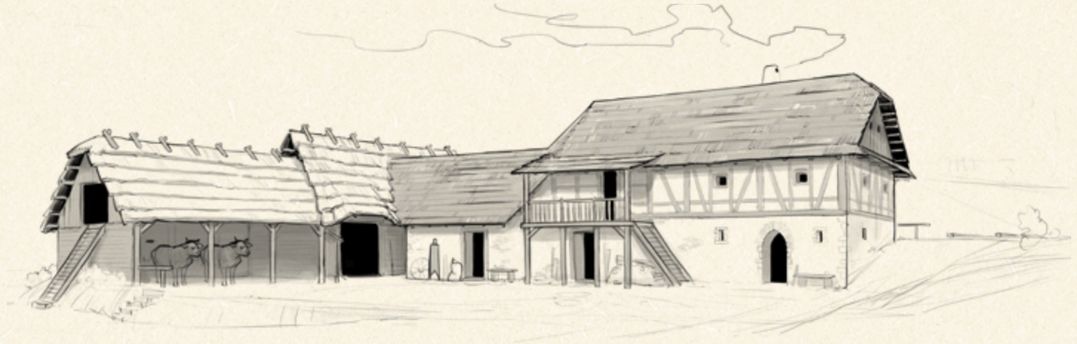
In the prosperous city of Kuttenberg, wealthy clients were never in short supply, and a skilled tailor could afford a well-situated house in the heart of town. That said, tailors in this period focused solely on sewing. All fabric preparation, such as dyeing and cutting, was handled by other craftsmen. However, to simplify and enhance the gameplay experience, we have combined these roles, making the tailor in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II a representative of all these trades.

Thanks to our efforts, bakers now have access to a variety of ovens. Some are placed outdoors, while others were designed for indoor use. In the bakeries of Kuttenberg, you will find not only bread but also sweet pastries and pretzels. Historical records show that baking was often done not just in bakeries but also in mills, bathhouses, and, of course, within castles, where fresh food had to be prepared on-site rather than brought in from distant towns.

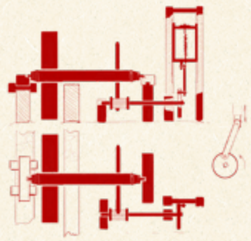
One of the least appreciated and most unpleasant professions has earned its rightful place on our map. As was historically accurate, the tannery is located in isolation – close to a running water source and with ample space for cleaning, soaking, and drying animal hides. We have carefully depicted the intricate process of working with one of the most valuable materials of the medieval period. Hunting was reserved for the nobility, and so leather goods made from deer or boar were expensive luxuries. These included belts, pouches, shoes, saddles, and horse tacks. Processing animal hides required significant time, space, and physical effort. Tanners often worked with carcasses several days old, regardless of the season. The stench was overwhelming, which is why you'll rarely find other dwellings near a tanner's workshop. What you will find, however, is a clever system of wooden piping and vats used for soaking, cleaning, and dyeing hides – sure to catch the eye of any enthusiastic medieval engineer.

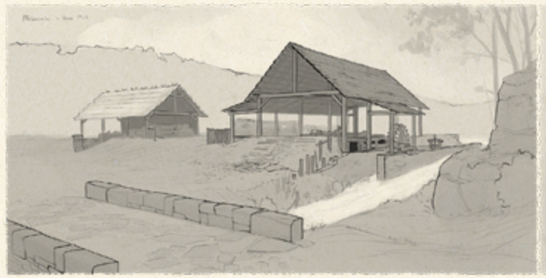
When designing the basic layout of the game world, it was essential to consider not only the placement of homesteads, farmsteads, and suitable spots for campgrounds. We knew the map also needed to be enriched with structures that often function independently even today since they were serving as important communication hubs, commercial points, and landmarks. In addition to the tanner's secluded outpost, mills were a perfect example. That's why you'll find them on both the Bohemian Paradise and Kuttenberg maps. Colorful market stalls lined the streets of towns and villages, drawing people in. Open shop windows in burgher houses enticed customers with the scent of freshly baked bread, the clink of pewter and ceramic dishes, or the gleam and precision of metal goods.

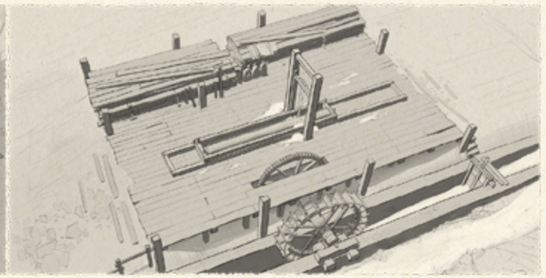
Outside the town walls, far from the main gates, the atmosphere slowly began to change. It was just as lively and loud, but full of different tones, colors, and very different smells. Along the waterways, massive mills, forges, sawmills, and foundries worked almost continuously. They were built to be easily supplied with vast quantities of wood, coal, stone, and ore, which were processed into building materials for the region's expanding settlements.



From a gameplay perspective, mills were just as important to us as other large homesteads. When designing them, we wanted them to be easily distinguishable even from a distance. This was especially important in the Trosky region, where several mills are located fairly close to one another. That's why the Lower Semine Mill includes a water-powered sawmill, giving the area a completely different character. It became a unique point of connection between woodcutters, millers, and merchants, serving as a distinctive landmark within the landscape of ponds and forests.

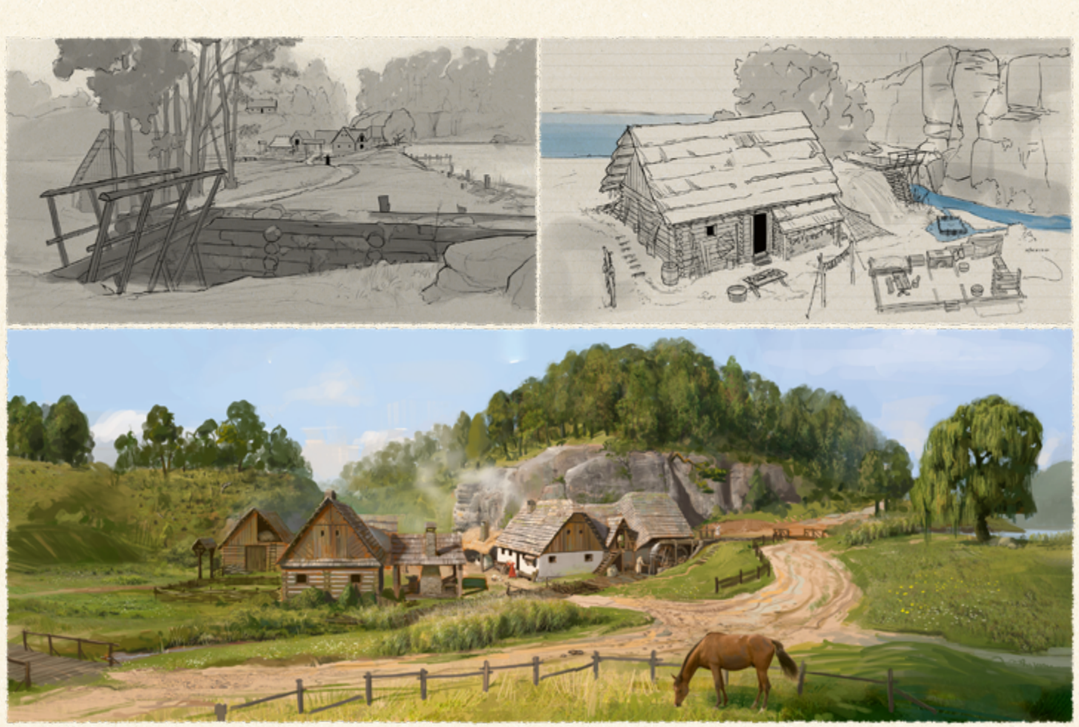




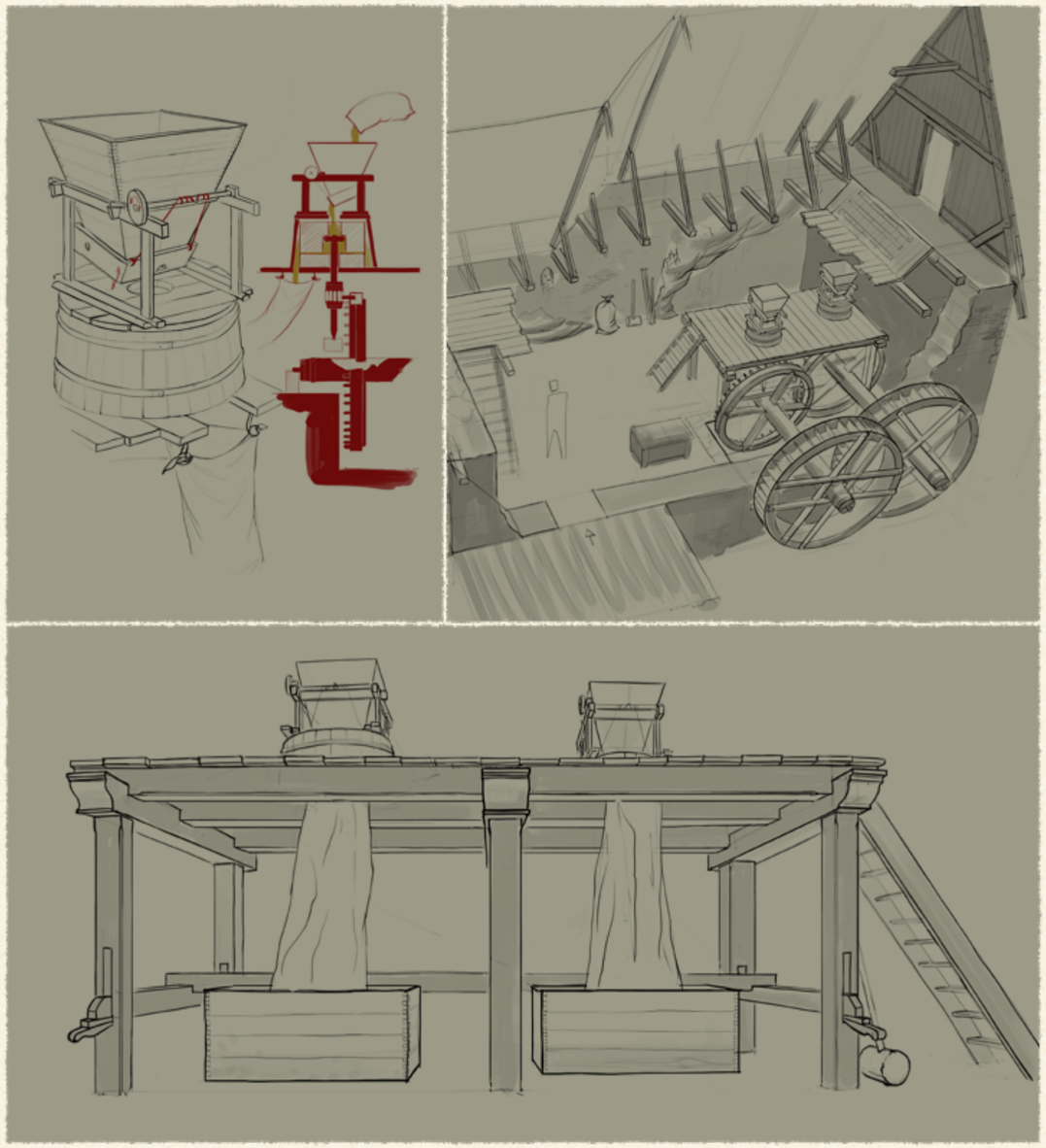


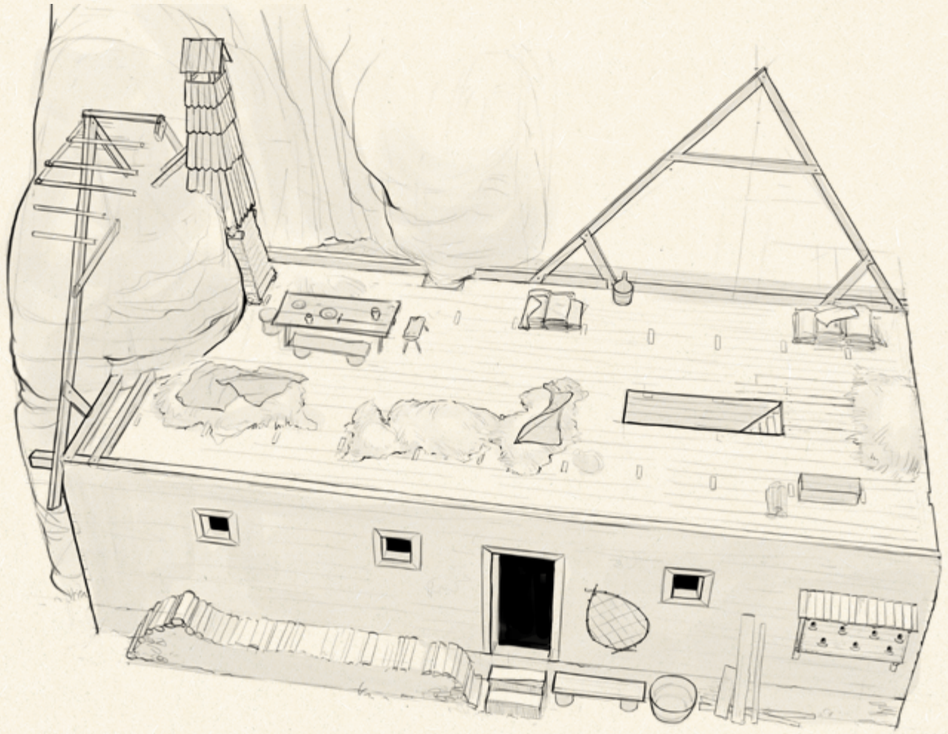
The Nebakov Mill still stands today in its Baroque form. It has been a pivotal part of the Trosky region since the 15th century, primarily serving to grind grains into flour. The mill also included an oven that produced rye bread for the surrounding area.

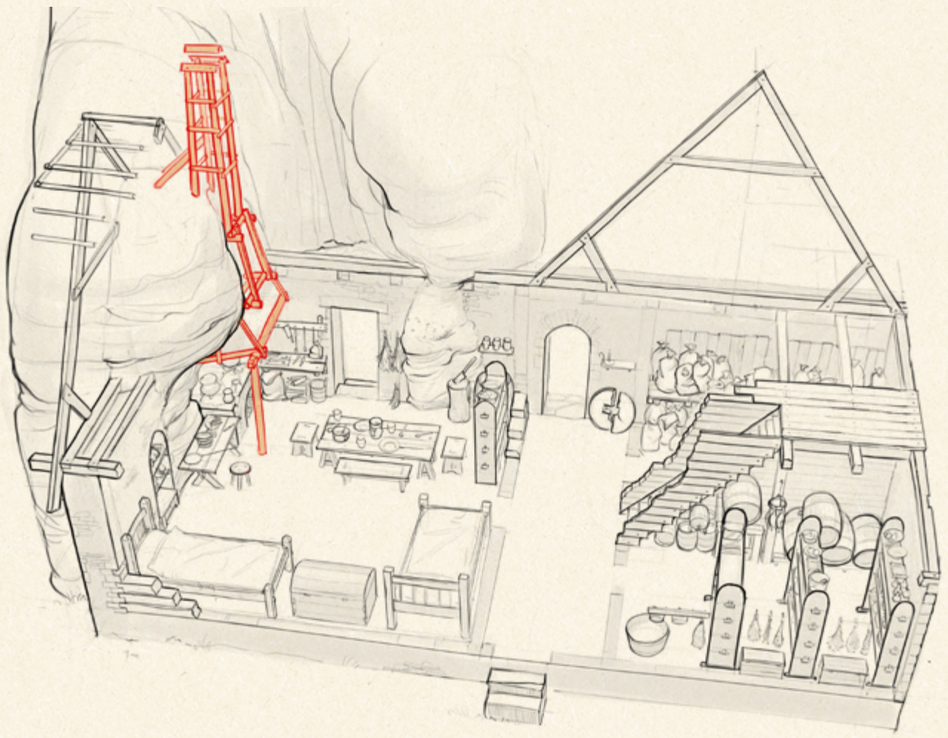
What fascinated us most was how cleverly the mill was designed to take advantage of its natural surroundings. Built just below the pond's dam, the structure featured a ground-floor chamber partially carved directly into the rock. We believe this room may have served as an excellent cold-storage space and pantry for a black kitchen.



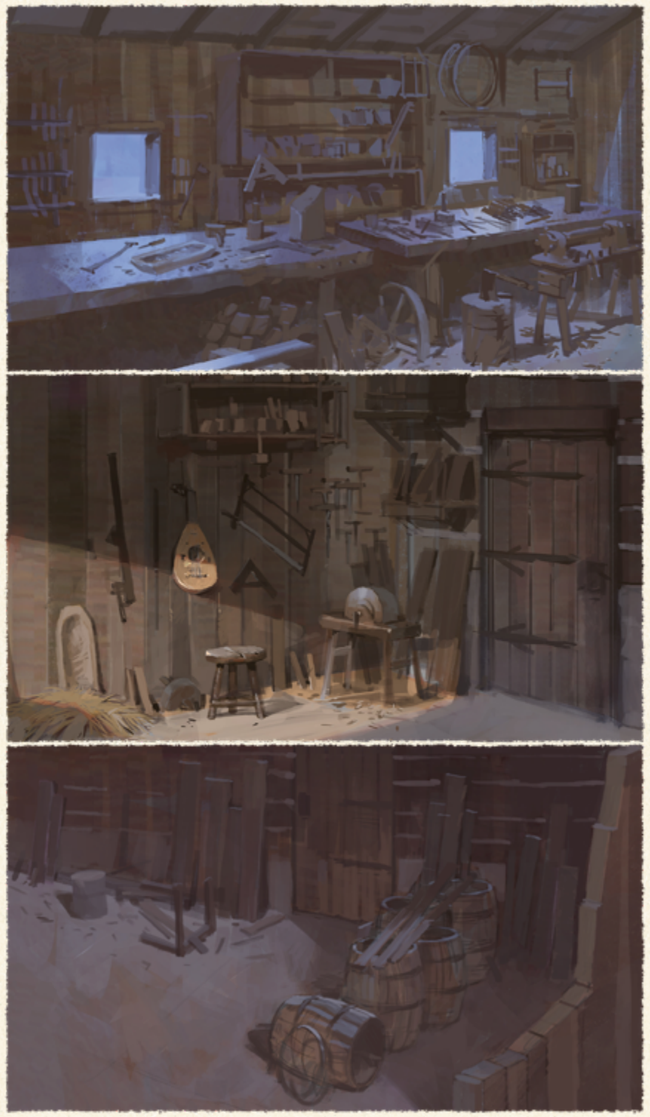
Designing a medieval mechanism to function within a game environment turned out to be an even greater headache than creating a fully stable residential building, such as a house or castle. How do you authentically reconstruct a structure full of moving parts? How do you determine the rhythm, force, or natural influences that interact with it to create perfect working harmony? The process of developing a functional model led to numerous revisions and redrawings. Only later did we realize that using an upper waterwheel design wouldn't easily translate into the version needed for a lower drive system.

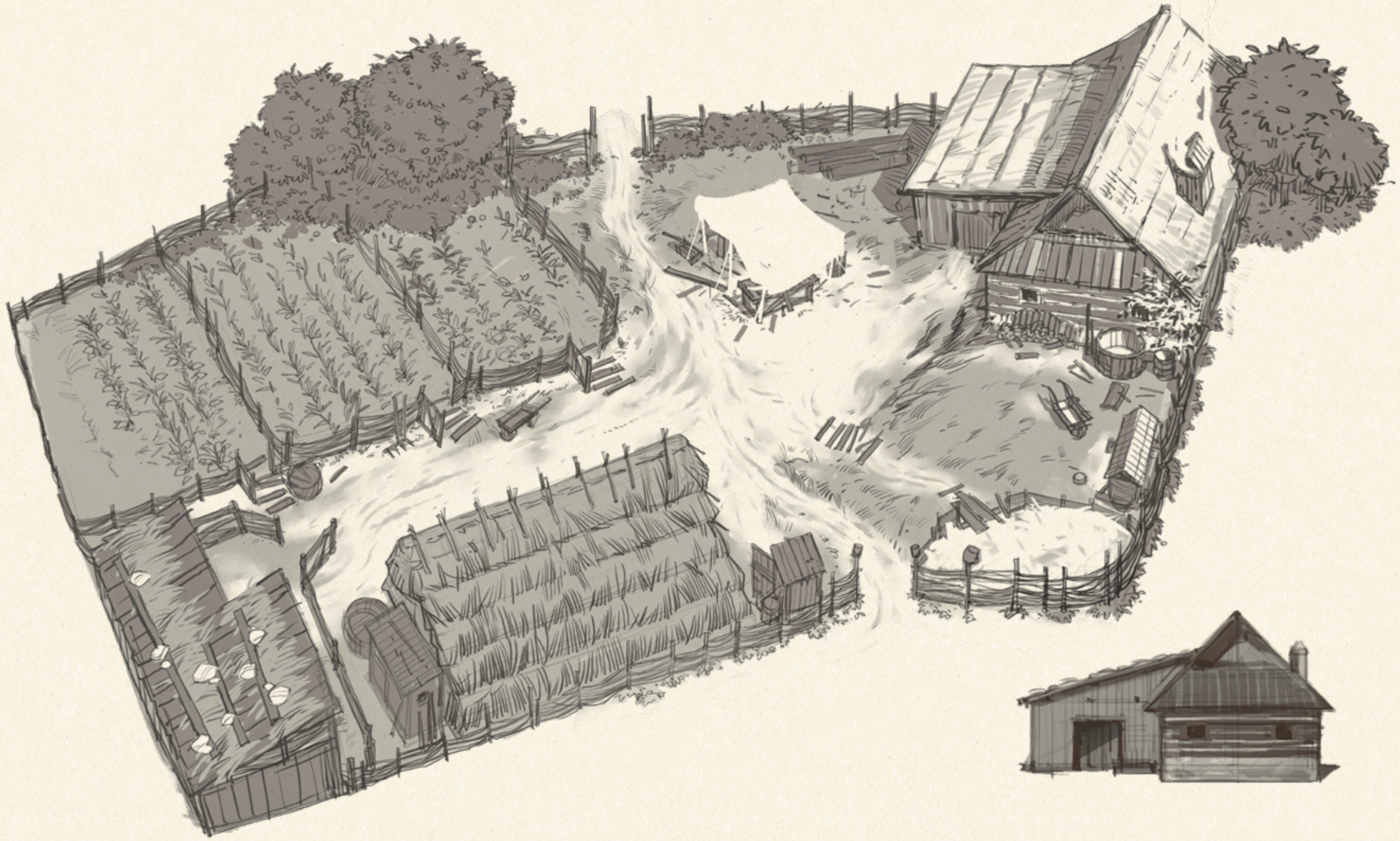


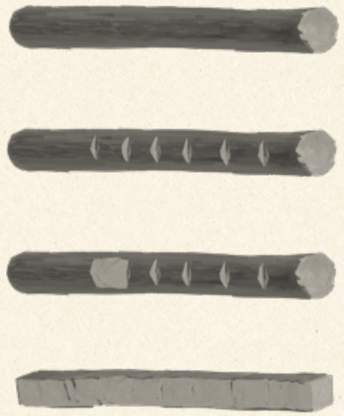




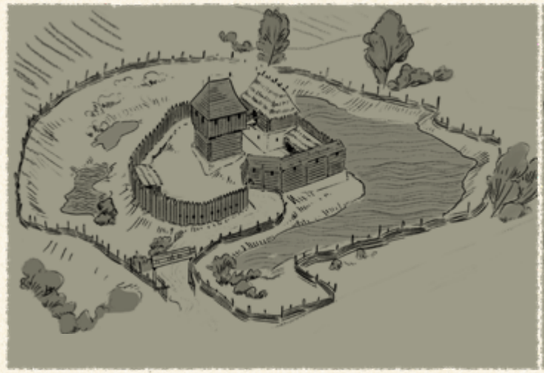
A medieval carpenter was far more than just a craftsman producing plain furniture without imagination or an understanding of physics. A carpenter could also be an artist. Beyond basic beams, square tables, and simple benches, a skilled carpenter was capable of crafting beautiful cabinets, chests, and figurines, all adorned with finely carved ornaments or hand-painted details. A true master of wood understood the material so well that he could even create musical instruments, such as a lute, in his workshop.







Although the Czech lands are renowned for their beer culture, we wanted to present Kuttenberg as a region rich in vineyards. It was during the 14th century that viticulture in Bohemia expanded beyond the confines of monasteries. Wine, though initially tart and unrefined, was embraced by the Emperor and King Charles IV, who brought the tradition from France hoping that wine culture would spread throughout the kingdom. Of course, no historical Czech setting would be complete without hop cultivation and beer production. Sadly, due to time constraints and map size, we were unable to fully implement the entire process of malting and brewing. However, we'd still like to share our design for what a medieval brewery in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II could have looked like.



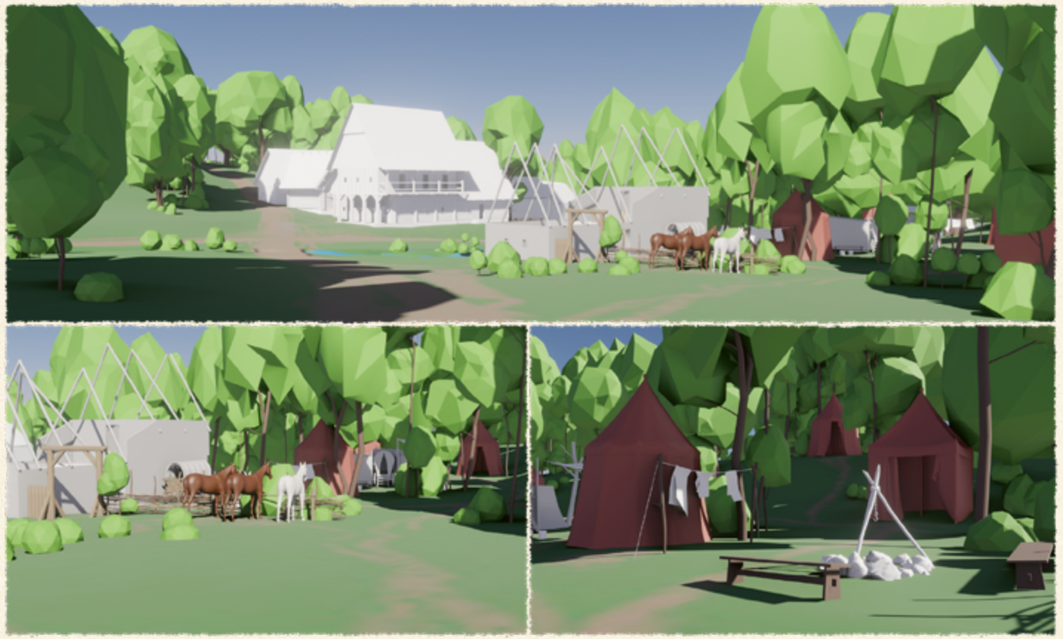
The project was planned for roughly the same location where the brewery in Kuttenberg stands today. Just like its real-life counterpart, our imagined brewery was to be built on the ruins of a decaying fortress. Its silhouette hinted at a traditional layout that would become typical for breweries a few centuries later. Unusually for the 15th century, our design envisioned a fully self-sufficient brewery. The production process was divided among several buildings, ranging from the preparation of raw ingredients to the final maturation of the beer.

Services

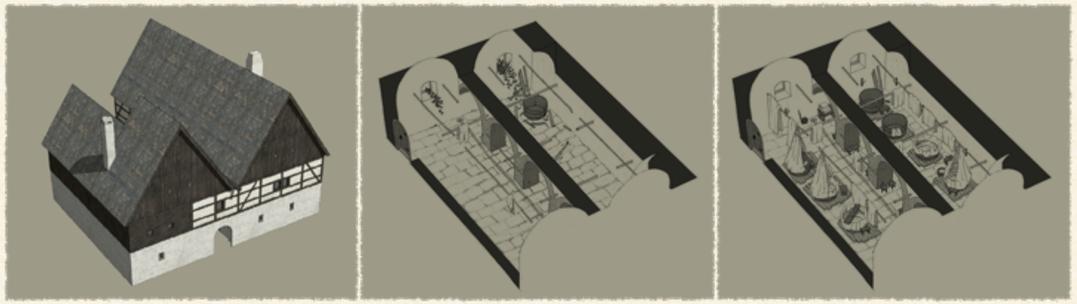
Despite his best efforts, Henry simply cannot do everything on his own. Therefore, he must earn his living by working for farmers or at feasts for the nobles he serves. However, a generous host is not always around to take care of him. Fortunately, Henry can stop by an inn, where they will provide food and drink, lodging for the night, and useful information, as well as new acquaintances – connections that could prove just as important as the roof over his head, as they may open up unexpected opportunities.

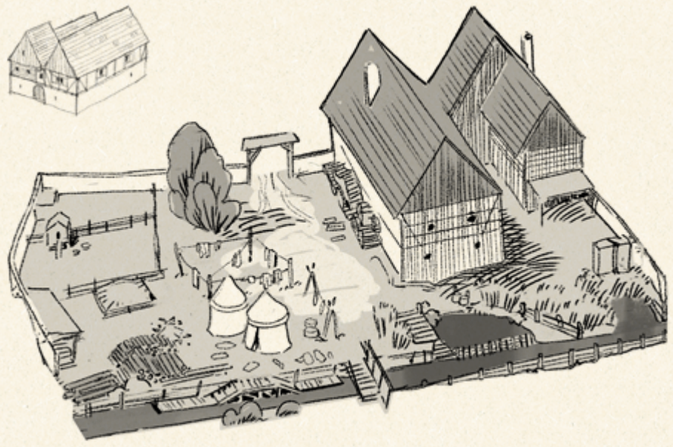
Medieval inns could be found on nearly every corner. At the time, it was common to drink beer rather than water, mainly due to the poor quality of water, so inns became frequent refuges for townspeople and travelers alike.

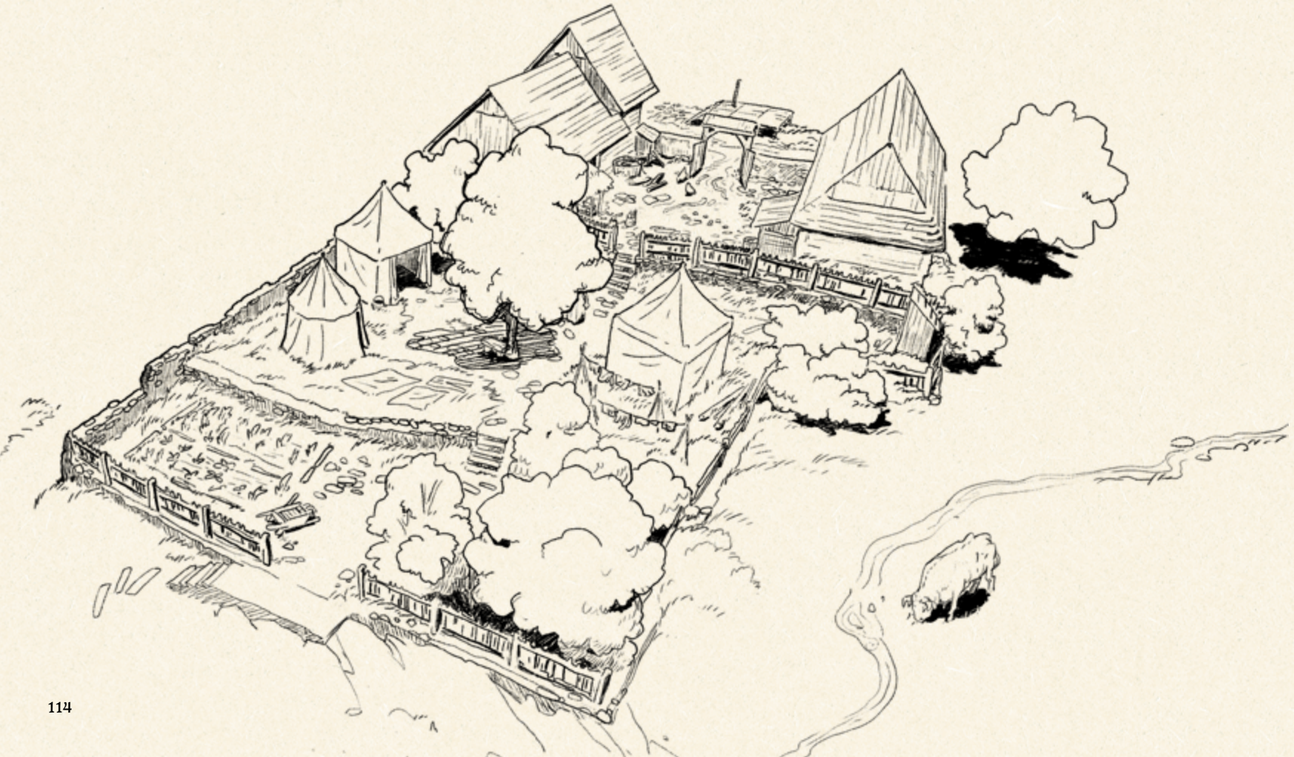
Summer. The season of ripening fruits and vegetables, the gathering of flowers and herbs for dyes, remedies, and spices. Preparations for haymaking and stockpiling winter supplies are in full swing. The fine weather makes travel easy, and the roads are bustling with livestock and people headed for the markets. The biggest crowds gather at city markets and fairs, where merchants from far and wide must first acquire a residence permit, pay a toll at the city gate, and often leave again before nightfall. What goods could be sold, and on which days, was dictated by local market law. Wednesdays were for bread, Thursdays for meat. In reality, this cycle was strict and complex, but in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, time limitations bend to gameplay. That's why Henry can visit a lively market in Kuttenberg every single day.



Bathhouses were often found near taverns and inns, offering weary travelers a chance to cleanse not only their bodies, but sometimes even their souls, regardless of the size of their purse. These establishments primarily served as places where people could get their injuries treated, find help when ill, or simply get their clothes washed and enjoy basic grooming services. At the same time, bathhouses served as social hubs where politics were discussed, deals were made, and everyday quarrels were settled. And, of course, many visitors would indulge in the company of young bathmaids.







Animal Husbandry

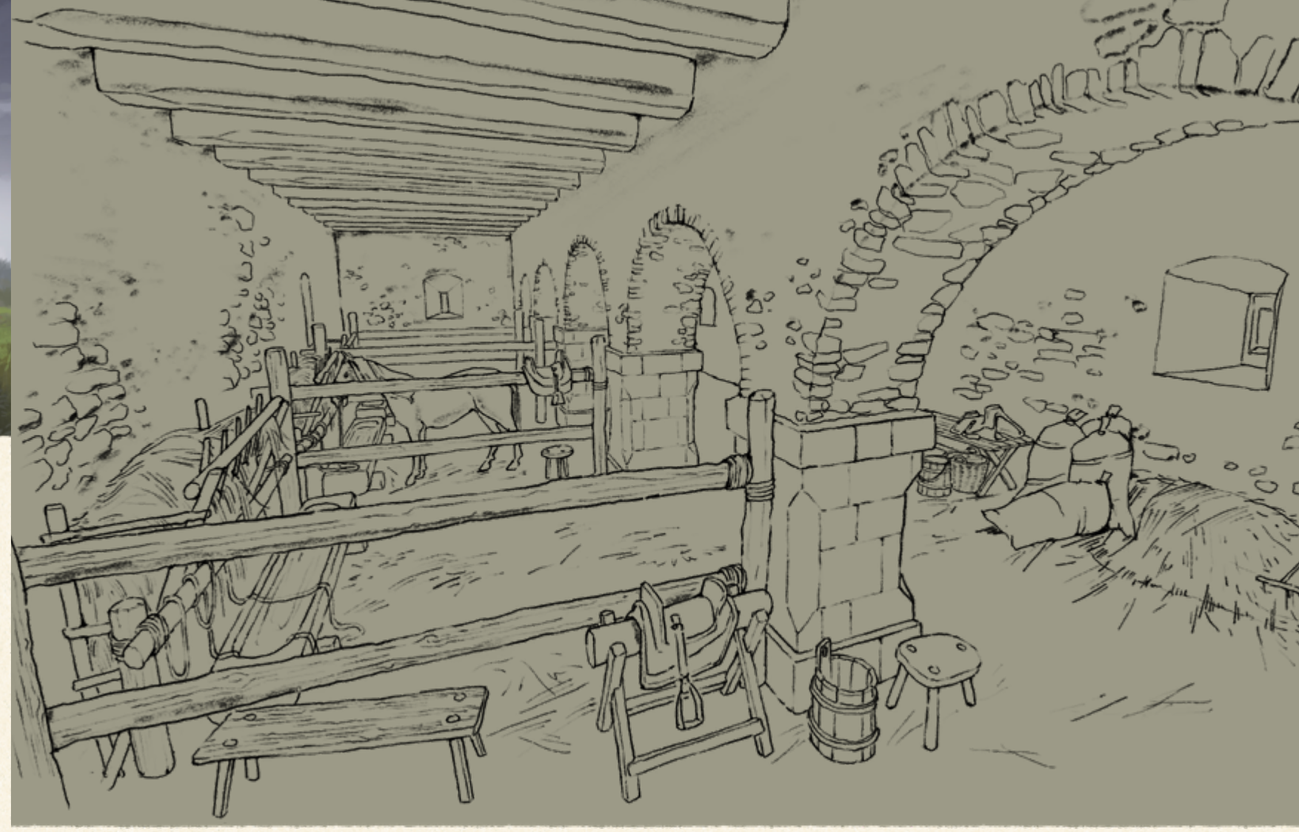
Just as humans tame nature and transform it into farmland, they also domesticate the animals that share the land with them. In addition to fields, villages are surrounded by broad pastures and meadows, where freshly cut grass is left to dry. Farmsteads are bustling with workers who spend their days tending to animals, which are an essential source of not only food and raw materials, but also labor and transportation.

Farm animals are an inseparable part of rural life. In every corner of the land, one might find a grazing sheep or cow. What may surprise players is how deeply the presence of animals shaped the game environment. Their inclusion raised questions about whether the land should be fenced, and whether the fences should keep animals in or out. We had to consider how theft would be handled. Livestock was the property of regional nobility rather than the farmers. We also had to evaluate whether the landscape contained enough meadows where animals could graze throughout the year and whether those meadows could produce enough hay to keep the livestock healthy and strong during the harsh winter months.

It is worth noting that in earlier times, the humble pig held a far more respectable status among domestic animals than it does today. It had not yet been fully domesticated and still closely resembled its wild boar cousins. Pig herding was an ideal task for the younger members of a household, who would lead them into the forest to forage for acorns, beechnuts, and various roots. There, the pigs lived in a way not too different from their wild counterparts.

Alongside pigs, poultry has traditionally been a favorite among farmers. While designing the game world, it was a pleasant reward to explore the unusual and creative shapes of chicken coops, each of them imbued with the charm of local folk craftsmanship.

Horse breeding was a major industry in the Middle Ages, as highlighted by the large stud farm featured in the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance. That tradition continues in the sequel. While the stud farms on the new maps may not be as grand, even the smaller ones take excellent care of their horses. These elegant animals received considerable attention even in medieval times. Cozy stables can often be found near noble estates, castles, fortresses, or attached to wealthy farmsteads. Less affluent farmers typically relied on oxen, whose robust build made them better suited for many types of labor.



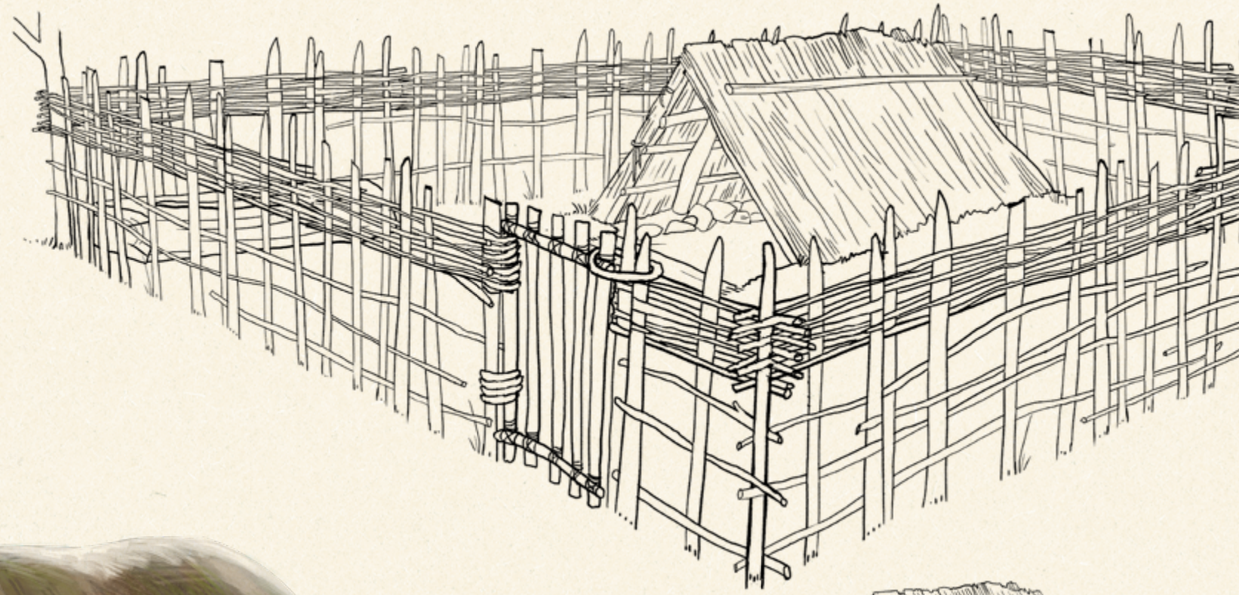
During world design, we made a conscious effort to set horses apart from the rest of the livestock. Their elevated status is also reflected in the severe punishment for horse theft. Even Henry himself isn't exempt when it comes to grand theft… horse.

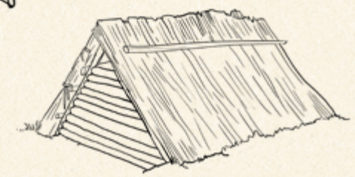
For a young knight like Henry, a horse is far more than just a means of transportation or a companion on countless adventures. A healthy and strong warhorse is a knight's pride and deserves proper care. During development, it was important to provide enough variety. Horses come in different shapes and sizes – some are modeled after light racing breeds, while others resemble heavy draft horses. Even their heads and nostrils vary in shape. Their appearance is further enriched by various color patterns and markings, and by a range of mane and tail types. Naturally, human creativity finds ways to adorn horses, leading to numerous designs for braids and knots.

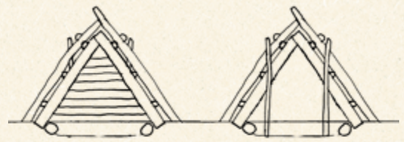
Whether Henry obtains a new steed or chooses to remain loyal to his trusty Pebbles, he now has more ways than ever to make his horse the stuff of legends. Compared to the first game, the selection of horse armor, caparisons, saddles, and other accessories has greatly expanded.

In the age of chivalry, one's horse was a symbol of their reputation. A rider was immediately seen as someone of influence when they arrived in a fine leather saddle, held an ornately decorated bridle, and draped their horse in a luxurious, multicolored caparison.

Dogs assisted humans in hunting, guarded their property, and could be trained. It's no surprise that they enjoyed certain privileges among animals. While selective breeding and crossbreeding of dogs already occurred in the Middle Ages, it wasn't nearly as widespread as it would become in later centuries. Most medieval breeds were bred solely for hunting and guarding, and they looked much like Henry's own trusty Mutt.





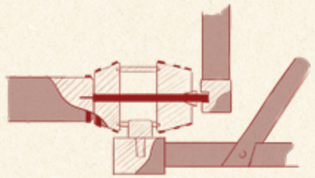


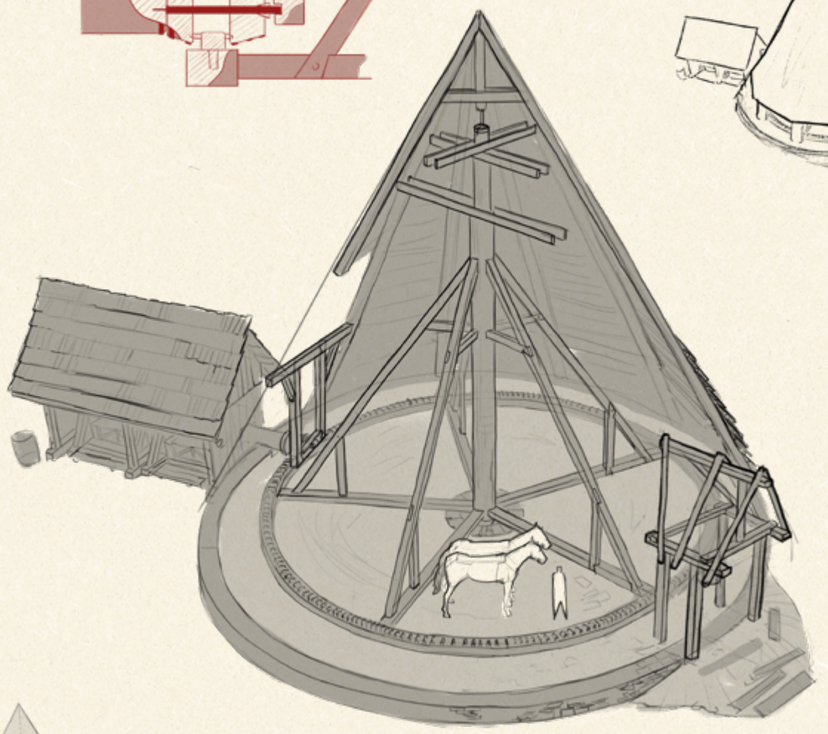
Silver

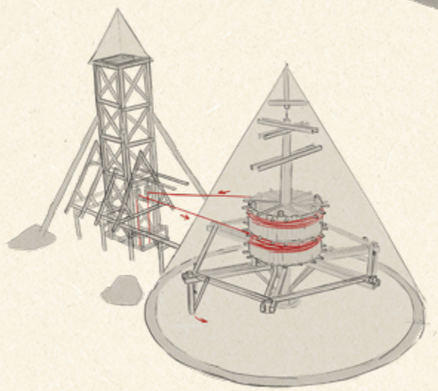
One of the threads tying both parts of Kingdom Come: Deliverance together is, without a doubt, silver. Henry becomes a witness to the high-stakes political game and rivalry between Wenceslas IV and Sigismund of Luxembourg, who are not just vying for the crown but also for this very source of wealth in Bohemia.

While in the first game we aimed to show the impact mining had on the landscape and the political situation in the region, we didn't have the opportunity to portray silver mining in all its beauty and hardship. And yet, it is precisely silver mining and processing that lie behind the rise of the Sasau region and the city of Kuttenberg.

When working on the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance, we faced a real challenge while creating Skalitz and its surroundings, where silver mining took place. The tradition of silver mining and processing in the Czech lands is long and remains an important part of the country's industrial history to this day. The bar was set high. Despite our great efforts, we unfortunately didn't have enough time or resources to recreate medieval mining in the first game the way we had envisioned. Fortunately, the Kuttenberg region gave us the opportunity to revisit our original concepts and even expand upon them.

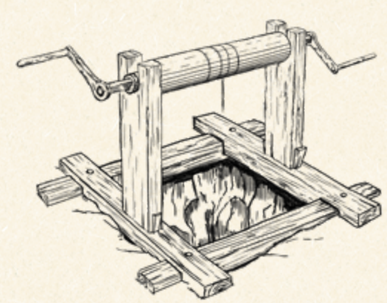


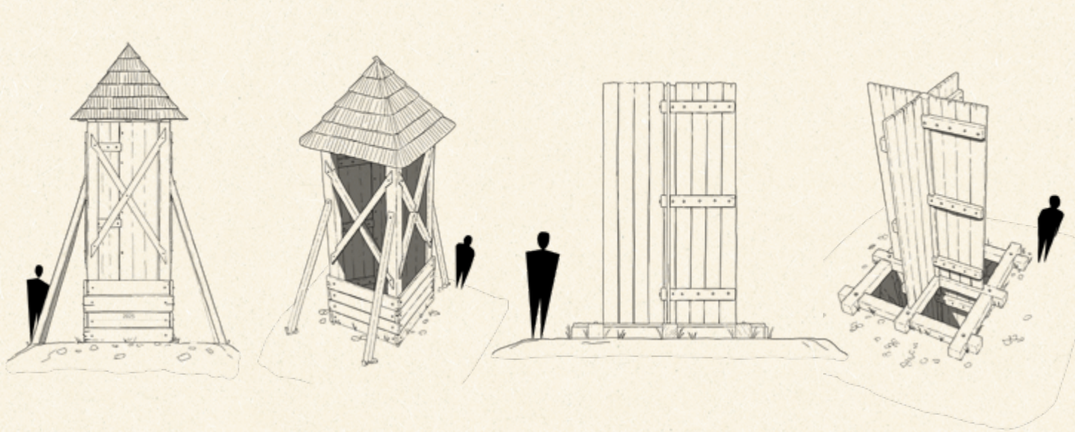


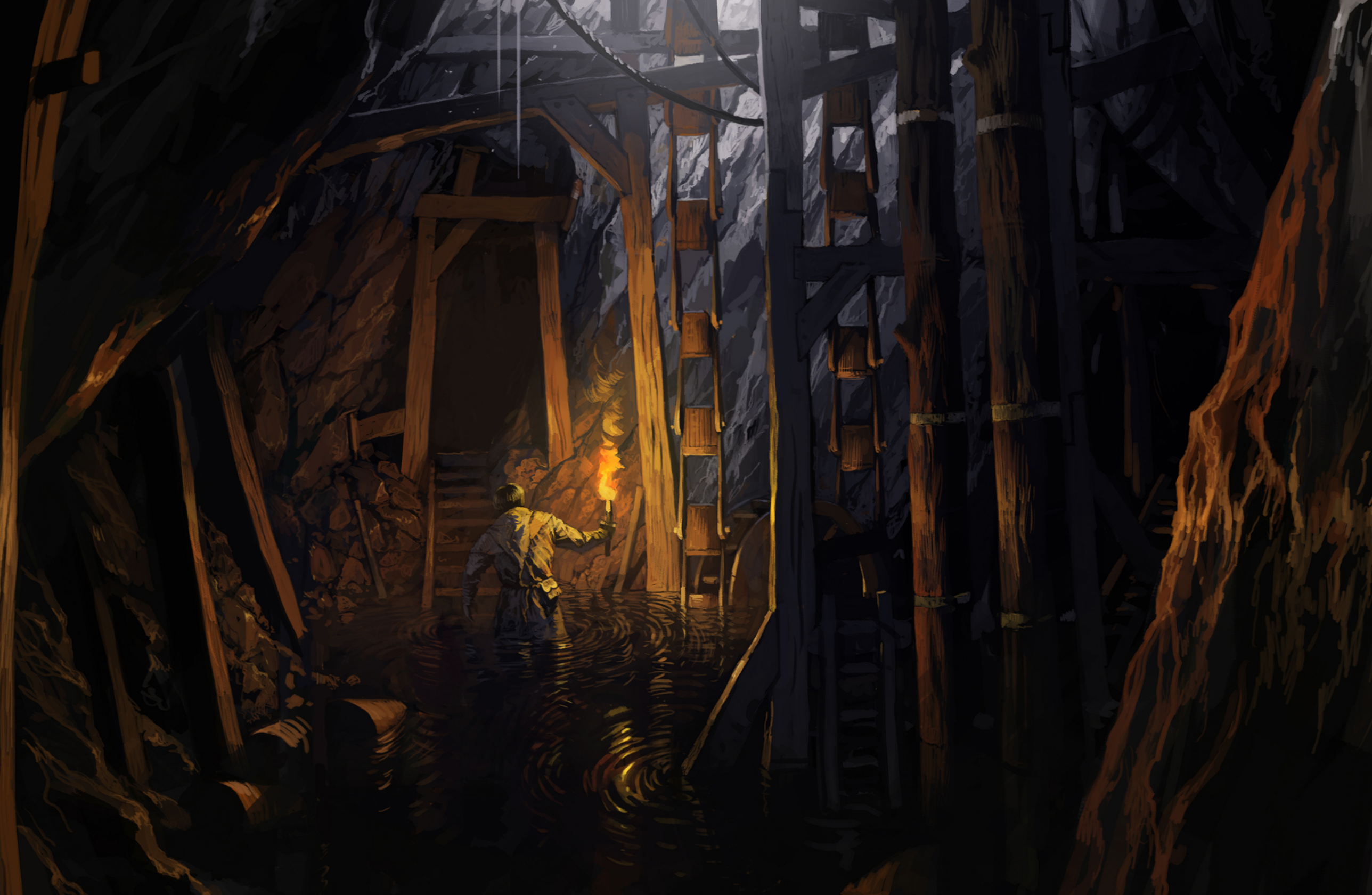


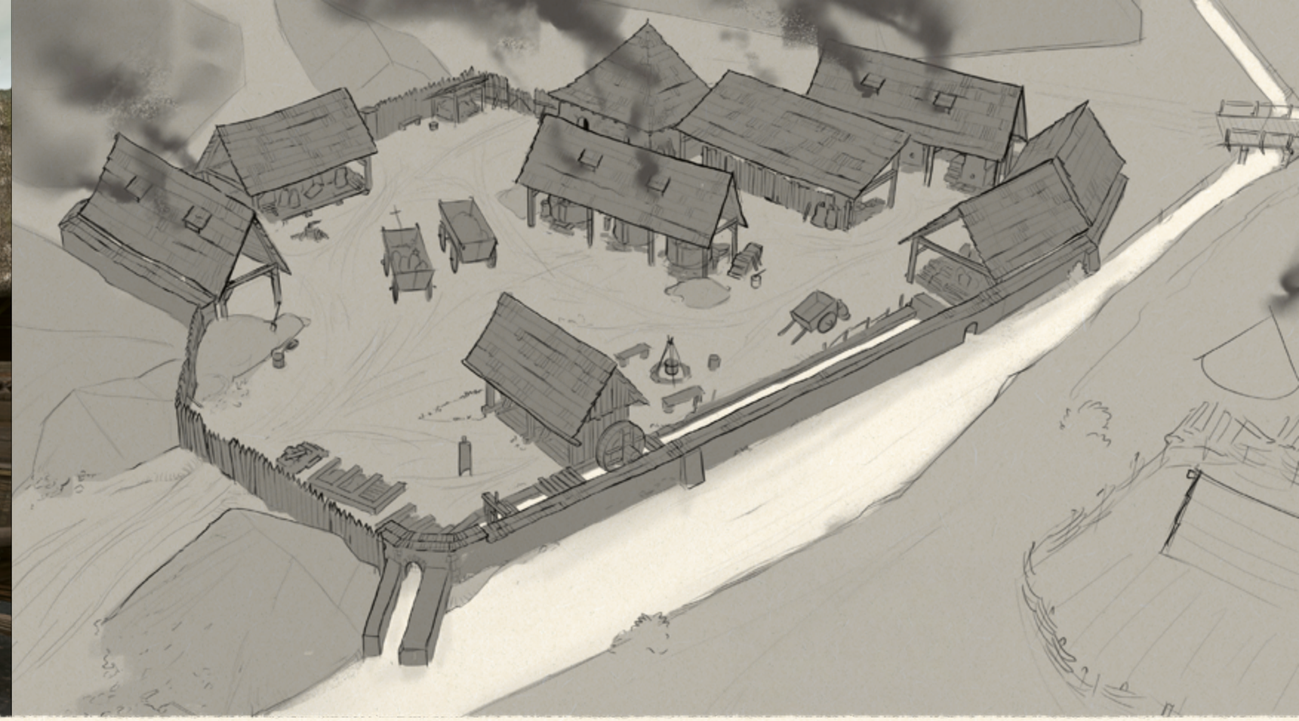
On our spare time, we eagerly visited mining museums and historical sites not only in the Czech Republic but also in Poland and Germany. We also drew inspiration from digital archives of more distant locations and from historical publications featuring period technical drawings.

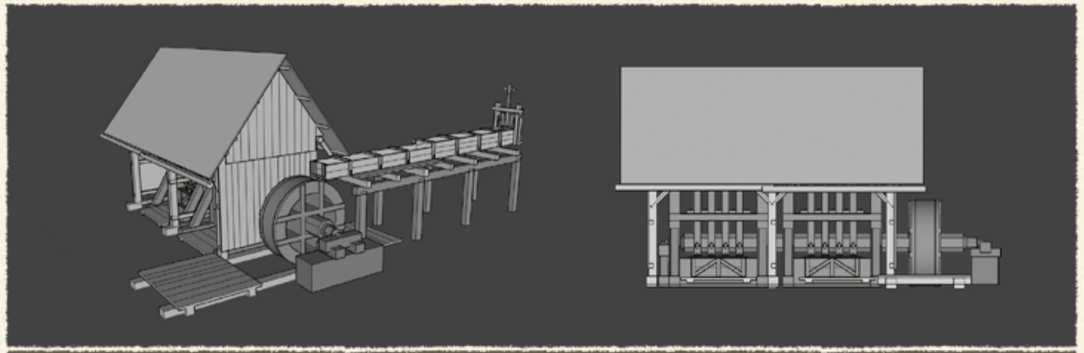
One of the most valuable sources was the work of the 15th-century German scholar Georgius Agricola. In twelve volumes, he compiled the knowledge of craftsmen of his time, creating a detailed handbook on mining. Thanks to these materials, we were able to design furnaces, foundries, mine shafts, tunnels, as well as tools and clothing suitable for medieval miners

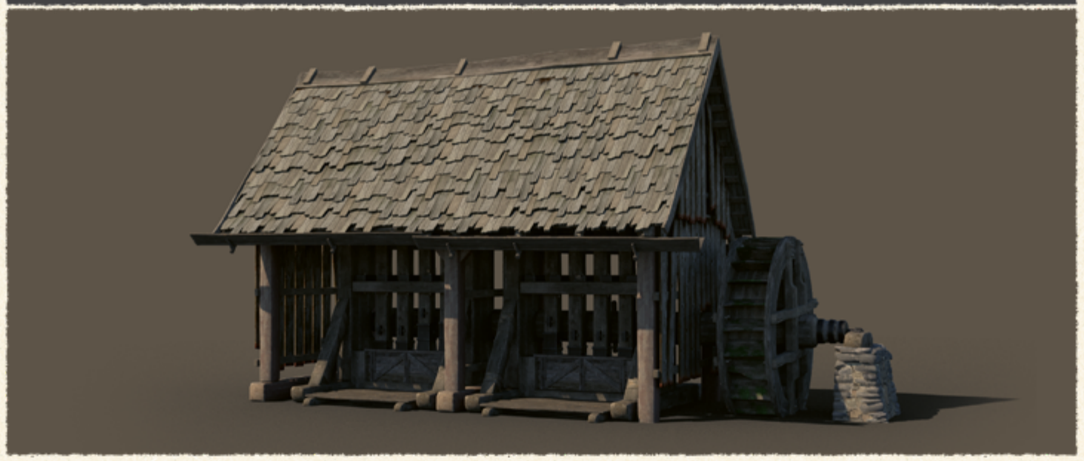






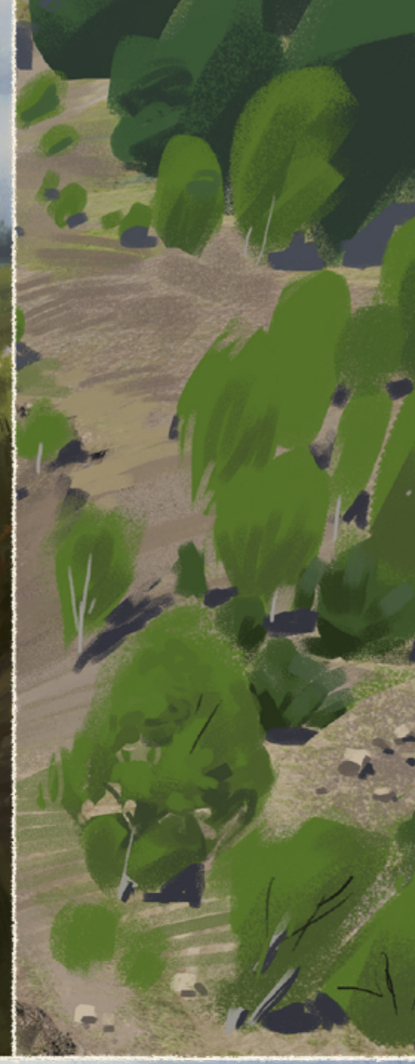






The mining village of Old Kutna is a prime example of how quickly the landscape around Kuttenberg transformed and how mining settlements formed in the Middle Ages. Archaeological finds have revealed traces of miners and their families who lived in this carefully organized settlement. The houses were arranged around a chapel, which was later rebuilt into a small church. Near the houses, archaeologists uncovered unique evidence of structures linked to mining and metallurgy. The found furnaces, vessels, shaft constructions, and a vast array of mining tools and lanterns have allowed us to show players just how advanced silver mining was even before the rise of Kuttenberg as a major urban center.

We wanted to capture the moment of transition, when the village slowly becomes overgrown, desolate, and fades away. The wealthy craftsmen moved to the growing Kuttenberg or set off in search of opportunities in other industrial areas. Only a few villagers remained in Old Kutna, along with a priest who tended to the empty church. The wind had yet to fully scatter the slag piles, and the rain hadn't flooded all the shafts and tunnels in the labyrinth of mines. Occasionally, someone still comes to gather firewood from the abandoned, dilapidated homesteads and remembers the days when Old Kutna was full of life.



Nobility

It sounds rather unlikely that the son of a village blacksmith, a commoner, would become an actor in events much bigger than himself overnight. But history is full of tales and stories that tell of unexpected adventures. In Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, we have the opportunity to follow medieval events through the eyes of Henry, the protagonist. By force of circumstance, he encounters many people of different faiths, nationalities, and backgrounds from all social classes of the medieval world. We took great care to craft even the smallest visual elements to deliver the most authentic experience possible. Here and there, we've even made elements more prominent so that everything is understandable better for the player. An example of this is the portrayal of the nobility in contrast to the villagers.

While the common people toil no matter the cold, hot or heavy rain, the nobility can devote themselves to entertainment, relaxation and politics. In summer, they retire to their smaller, cosy fortresses. Even in the summer heat, such a fortlet provides a welcome shelter for chaste and fragile ladies dressed in the most expensive fashionable tailor-made dresses. In chambers specially furnished for them, the so-called Frauenzimmer, and in the company of other ladies and maids, they tend to their beauteousness, learn to play musical instruments and read books. Mainly pious texts, of course. The young noblemen, on the other hand, pass their time by honing their swordsmanship, archery, hunting and horse riding. After all, jousting tournaments and horse races were still welcome pastimes and important social events. Ladies and gentlemen usually spend their evenings together. They begin with a feast of delicacies and alcohol. Between each course, there is an intermezzo filled with reciting poetry, complimenting the ladies present, thanking and toasting the host, dancing, and watching the jesters' performances.

But even the nobility had their duties and didn't spend all their time with festivities. Politics was discussed, marriages were arranged, alliances between entire families were debated, and the defence and administration of the domain was dealt with. The goal, of course, is always to secure a better position, gain more wealth and more prestige for one's house.

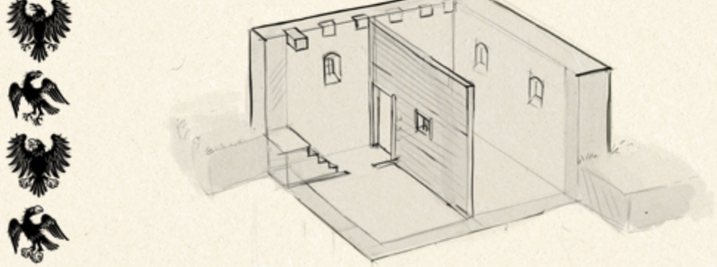
III

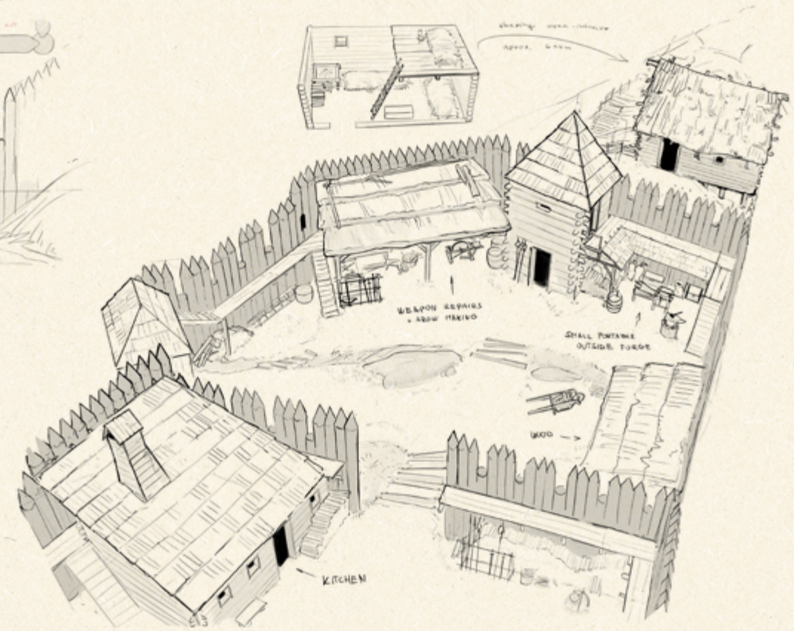
Castles and Fortresses

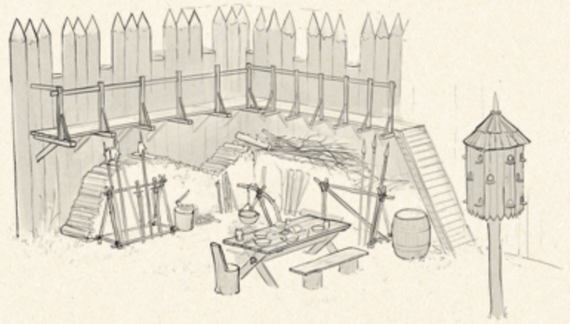
One of the greatest challenges during the development of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II was deciding which medieval landmarks to leave out. The number of castles and fortresses mentioned in scholarly literature is staggering, so we had to focus only on the most important ones, particularly in the Kuttenberg region. It simply wasn't possible to create every castle or stronghold in full detail. Moreover, the vast majority of these structures required planning and reconstruction in multiple stages – before and after an attack or before and after an important event, even with or without the presence of a military encampment. Preparing all these variants and adapting them to the terrain was time-consuming, but it allowed us to create a more dynamic and authentic environment for our characters.

Nebakov

During the early years of development, we devoted most of our attention to two prime examples of late medieval Czech architecture – the Trosky Castle and the Nebakov Fortress. We reworked the layout of the stronghold several times to ensure it fulfilled its strategic role on the rocky cliffs, all while staying true to historical logic and not cutting corners in its design. It was no easy task, but in the end, we created a unique fortress towering above the pond below. We paid special attention to the precise construction of the wooden fortifications, knowing that Nebakov would become the site for some of the most important military events on the map of Bohemian Paradise.



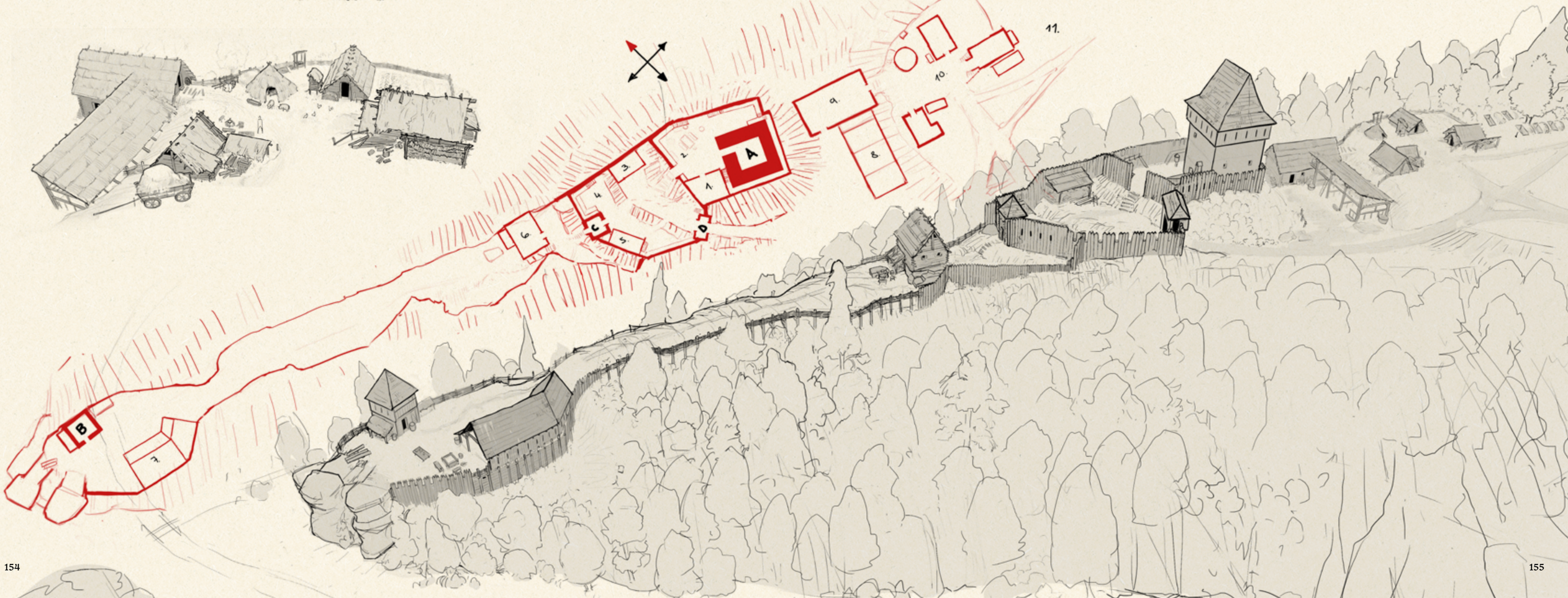




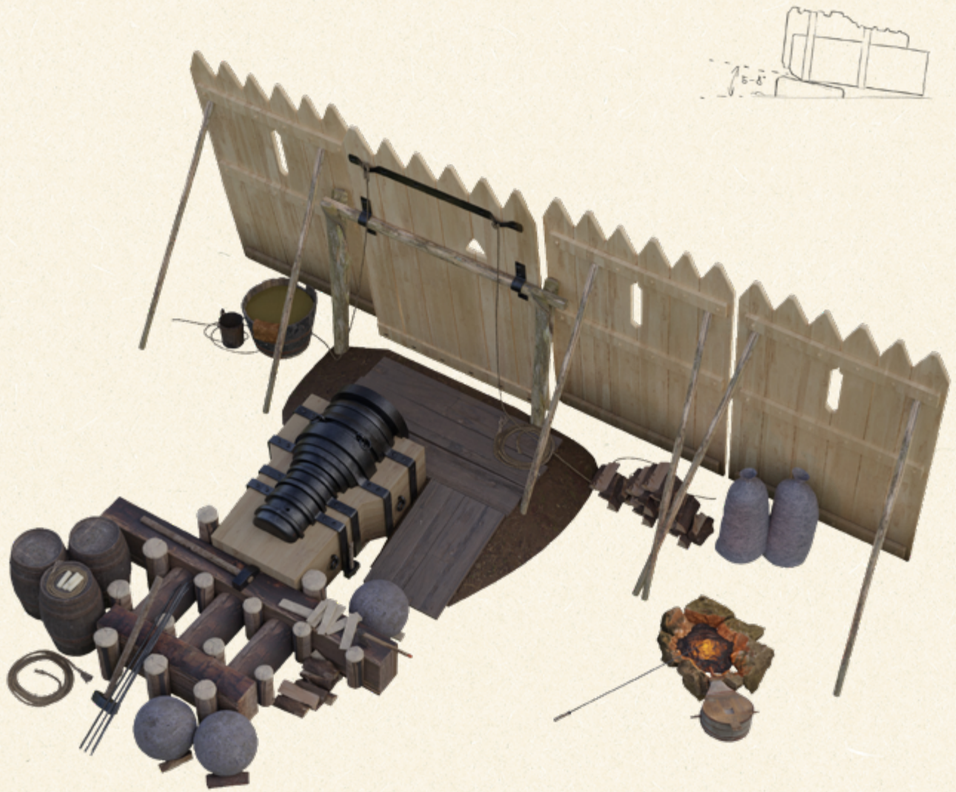
We had to calculate how many characters and animals could move simultaneously along the narrow paths clinging to the cliff's edge. Would we have enough room for combat on the battlements? What were the fastest routes from the lower part of the fortress to the upper section? Where could siege ladders be set up? Did we have wide enough doorways for armored characters to charge through without getting stuck?

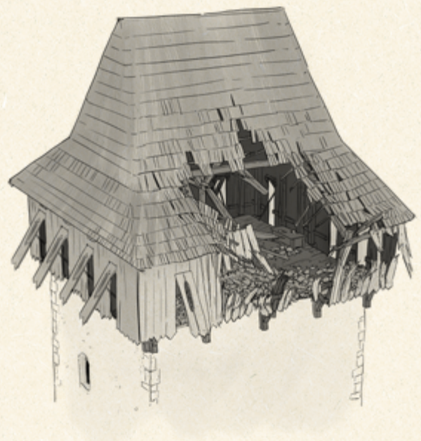
1. kitchen + armory
2. place for soldiers (eating...)
3. wood
4. blacksmithing
5. open armory (making arrows?)
6. sleeping area for soldiers
7. underground entrance and „shelter"
8. stables
9. stable master's house and storage
10. settlement (dugout shelters)
11. graves

A main tower
B water tower
C „exit" tower
D gate tower



Just processing the basic layout took a long time. Several complete redesigns followed as new narrative and technical requirements emerged. Eventually, we furnished the fortress, added story elements and interactive locations, and fine-tuned the visual tone and colors.





Our level art team spent countless hours bringing the Nebakov Fortress to life. Meanwhile, technology was being refined, other developers were playtesting, and more and more requests kept coming in about how the fortress should look for everything to function properly. However, thanks to the dedicated work of the whole team, we were eventually able to create a fortress that is both functional and unique, just as you can see in the game. The experience and insights we gained from this process allowed us to build every subsequent location much more efficiently.

Semine

Another fortress of Bohemian Paradise once stood near Semine pond and belonged to the lords of Semine. This picturesque estate, more of a manor than a military stronghold, was nestled in the heart of nature, near the site of an ancient Celtic hillfort, and it became an ideal location to showcase medieval traditions.

Therefore, we don't just witness the usual gatherings of nobles or horse races, but especially one of the oldest and most beautiful ceremonies – a wedding. We become witnesses to the feast preparations, the handing over of the bride to the groom in the presence of family and a priest, as well as the true celebration that, of course, calls for a proper toast. Traditional Czech food is complemented by cold beer and strong wine, which only highlights the beauty of the invited women and maidens, who won't let Henry sit idle for long as they invite him to dance. If he prefers another kind of entertainment, he can try his luck at dice or perhaps a fencing contest. For a moment, we can set aside the heavy themes of war and uncertainty in the Czech lands and simply enjoy ourselves.

Suchdol Fortress

Nowadays, few pay attention to the village of Suchdol. Yet, during the golden age of Kuttenberg, this settlement with its Gothic church was among the most important places in the region. The mere mention that Ulrich von Aulitz, one of the main antagonists of the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance, died here during a siege, made it an irresistible setting for part of the game's story. In the early 15th century, a large fortress belonged to the influential Písek family, prominent burghers of Kuttenberg. They sided with King Wenceslas IV in the conflict over the Bohemian throne. With Sigismund's army nearly at the gates, the stronghold had to brace for a potential siege. Meanwhile, Sigismund of Luxembourg advanced on Kuttenberg, determined to seize the silver hidden in the royal treasury. Eventually, the attack on Suchdol did indeed come, and it left its mighty tower damaged.

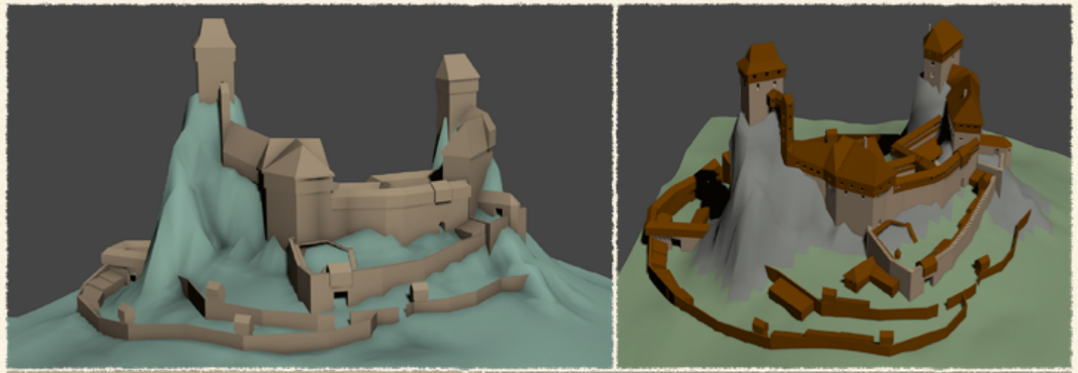
How effective were the medieval fortifications and their defense? On the walls of Suchdol Fortress, players are thrust into the role of a defender during a prolonged siege, witnessing multiple attempts to breach the stronghold. At first, the enemy tries to catch the defenders off guard with a sudden assault. When it fails, they must resort to more cunning tactics and deception. This leads to the use of basic siege ladders and sliding mantlets that served as mobile cover against incoming projectiles.

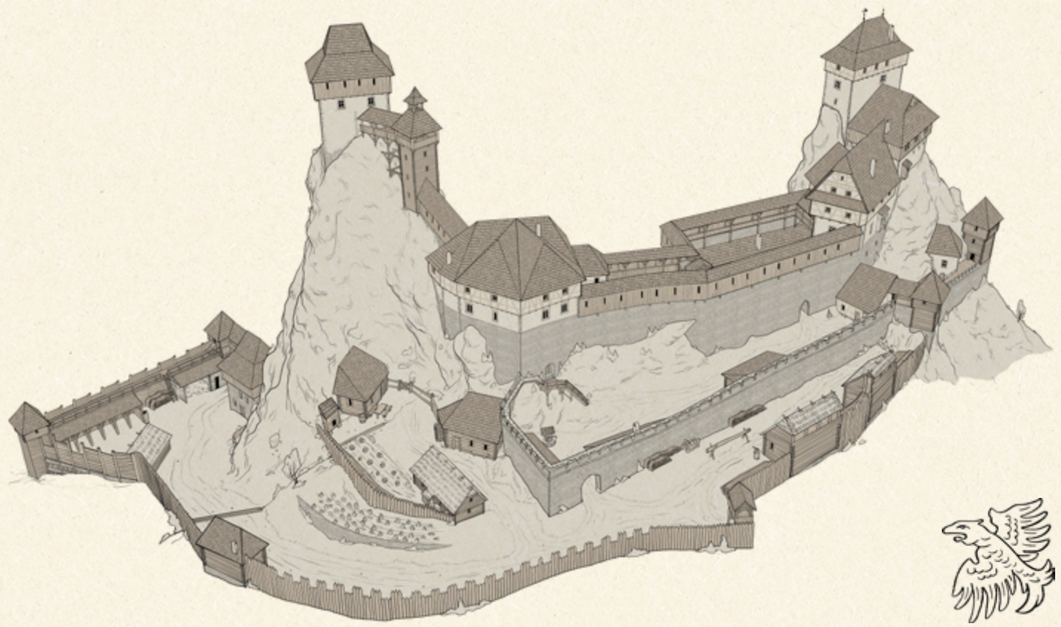
If one side of the fortress proves too well defended, another, less fortified part, may be its downfall. Even natural and man-made obstacles like earthworks, moats, or bodies of water can eventually be overcome. A patient attacker knows how to prepare the battlefield - strategically positioning carts, tents, and shooting posts supplied with ammunition.

The dynamic development of this scenario required our team to study historical military treatises, the techniques for draining moats, the mechanics of medieval trebuchets, and the era's methods of transporting heavy siege equipment.

On the other side of the walls, equally vital was the precisely designed system of communication routes along the battlements, arrow slits, and within the stronghold itself. The layout of the fortress was meant to offer defenders the same advantage they would have had during a real siege. The tide turns, however, when a lucky shot from a siege engine crashes through the wooden ceiling of the gate tower and crushes the mechanism of the drawbridge.

The primary role of fortifications is to discourage the enemy from launching a costly siege, or at the very least, to delay them as much as possible. The palace tower of the donjon type, like the one in Suchdol, is designed as the final line of defense. Once it falls, the stronghold is lost. Or it would be… if not for a battle cry echoing in the distance. The attackers' lightly fortified camp becomes easy prey for a cavalry charge, and in the end, the fortifications fulfill their purpose after all.

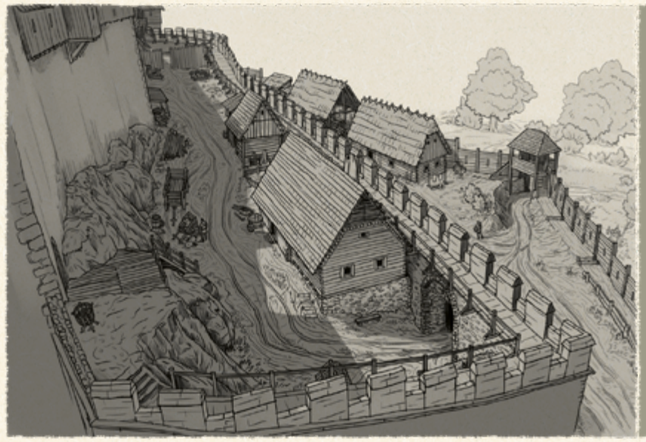


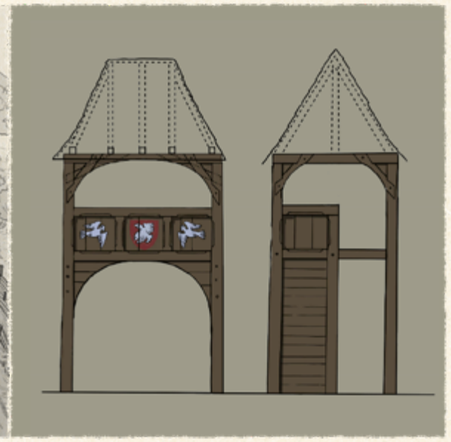


Trosky Castle

The largest structure in the Bohemian Paradise region of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, perched atop a unique volcanic formation nearly 500 meters above sea level, was not only our first major architectural challenge for the new game but also became a symbolic location that connects both parts of Henry's adventure. An unknown landscape, a different environment, the burden of great responsibility. This site marks a major step outside of our hero's comfort zone. That is one of the reasons why the pressure to reconstruct this mighty castle, today seen only as an incomplete ruin, was immense.

Our efforts to depict the castle's appearance at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries began with an extensive study of materials from the National Heritage Institute, available publications, and interpretations from other researchers. To this day, we haven't found answers to all our questions since archaeological excavations at the site were limited, and some parts of the structure have suffered irreversible damage over the centuries. Thankfully, that didn't stop us. With the help of comparative studies, digital sources, and collaborating architects, we managed to create the most accurate and plausible model of the castle featuring not only the two towers, Maiden and Crone, and two palaces, but also a range of residential and utility buildings, all surrounded by a double ring of fortification walls and a palisade below. We created multiple spaces fit for key characters and for housing a large garrison in the service of Lord Otto von Bergow, a real historical figure who owned the castle in the year 1403.





Some of the most pivotal moments in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II unfold within the castle walls. As such, this location features the greatest number of mural paintings in the game. We also enriched it with ornate wooden ceilings and decorated furniture. And as if that wasn't enough, Henry can climb all the way to the top of this unique site, exploring even the castle chapel located on the first floor of the Maiden tower.

Maleshov and Pschitoky

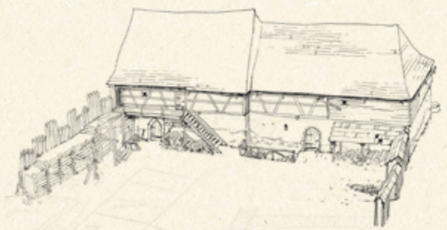
From the known history of this village near Kuttenberg, we know that as early as the 14th century, it was considered a desirable property. The sizable estate changed owners multiple times, which clearly influenced its layout and appearance, and significantly delayed the construction of the residential manor – the main fortress. We therefore chose to depict the Pschitoky fortress during its construction phase. This was a great opportunity to explore medieval construction techniques and architectural style, and to consider the amount of material that would have had to be transported to the site for craftsmen of the time to erect a moderately grand noble residence.

Miskowitz and Petschek

One of the places you unfortunately won't get to visit in the game is the picturesque village of Petschek and its local fortress. Originally intended as a full-fledged location, it was eventually cut from the map entirely during the planning and narrative development phase.

A similar fate awaited Miskowitz. Although the local fortress was meant to complement the layout of the entire village, it too didn't make it into the final version. All that remains are a few sketches showing a fortified courtyard with an irregular square layout, standing on a sloped bank by the village pond. Sadly, we were unable to find enough substantial historical records about the fortress during the time in which our story takes place. Notably, there is no mention of it being besieged, despite its proximity to Kuttenberg, which surely would have made it a strategic point of interest. We were thus faced with a decision. Either invent the entire context of its involvement in the story from scratch, or create the structure but leave it effectively unused.

The sheer amount of work required to bring such a complex building to life only complicated matters further. It soon became clear that the fortress wouldn't play a role in the narrative, and it would have to remain completely inaccessible to the player. Under those circumstances, it was ultimately better to leave it out altogether.



Military Encampment

One of the more unconventional tasks in designing the world of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II was creating a location not grounded in historical maps or archaeological evidence. Its layout could only be guided by the landscape itself and perhaps vague mentions in period chronicles – much like Vranik in the first game. This time, however, the task was even more significant, as we were designing a military encampment for the game's main antagonist, Sigismund of Luxembourg.

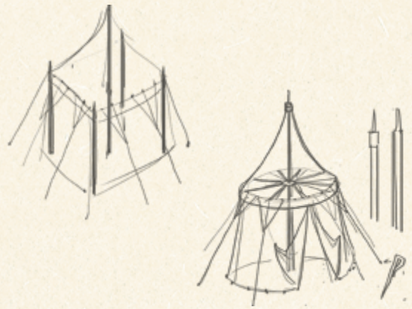
This camp had to meet not only key narrative constraints but also practical considerations of scale and functionality. It was crucial to think about how the camp would be used for gameplay activities and quests, while also considering the internal arrangement of different units and nationalities, as well as clear visual distinctions between command tents and those of ordinary mercenaries. Piece by piece, the sections of the camp eventually started to fit together like parts of a large, colourful construction set.

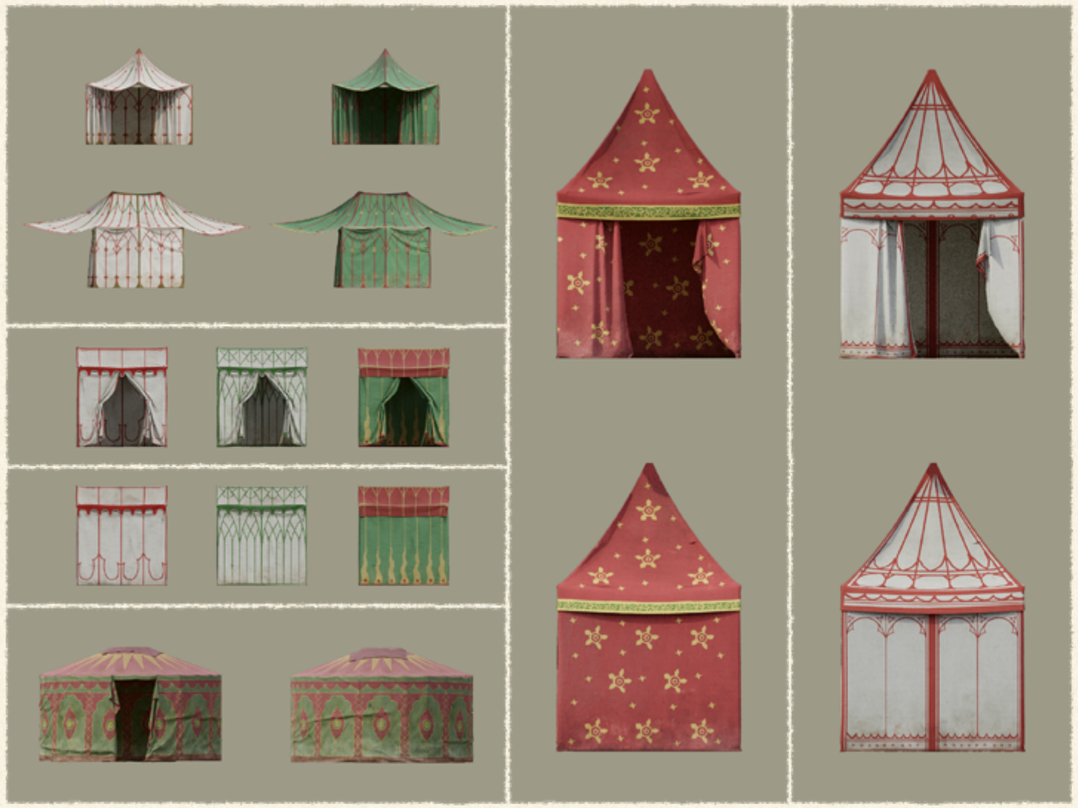
Choosing a suitable location for the camp was crucial and had to meet three key conditions: It needed to be large and flat enough, strategically positioned on a hill or hillock, and provide ample wood and fresh water. Large armies set up their camps according to proven rules. A standardized layout ensured quick and safe movement of soldiers and all others who were part of the encampment.

Hierarchy had to be maintained. In the heart of the camp stood the tent of the commander, surrounded by the tents of his court, the closest officials, and captains. The rest of the tents for soldiers and servants were then distributed around this central area.

Although the camp itself was usually not fortified, tents were sometimes pitched tightly together around the perimeter to form an impassable barrier. This made particular sense if there was a risk of a sudden raid by enemy light cavalry.

The camp also had to include important communal areas such as bathhouses, a central fire pit with a cauldron, and a tent with an altar where the priest held the field mass. Naturally, there were also pens for animals, water troughs, and a designated spot for building latrines.





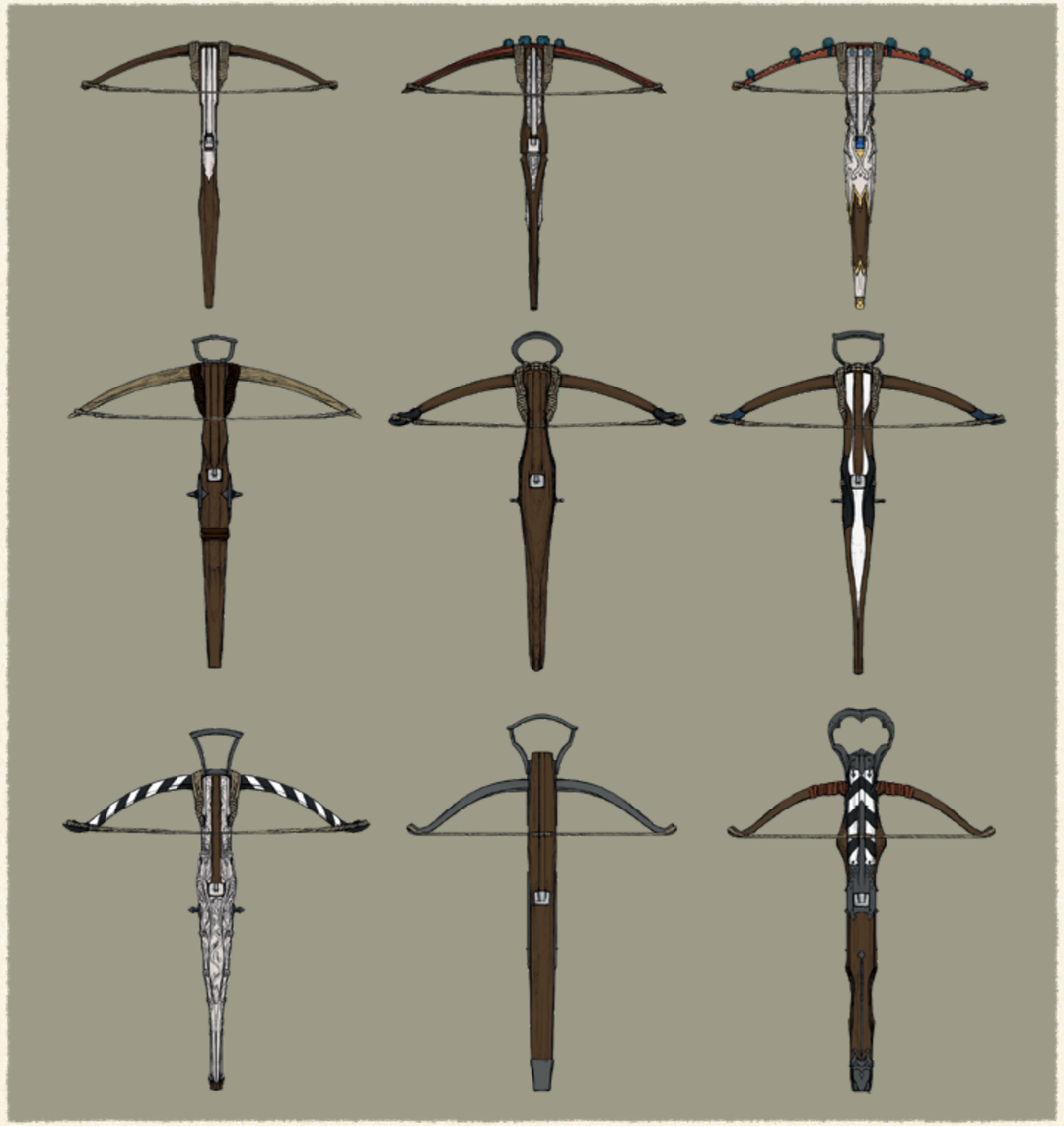
The layout and number of tents depended on the terrain, which dictated their placement. We also had to consider the camp's distance from Kuttenberg and nearby villages, as well as access to water sources, forests, and the roads used by moving troops.

Weapons and Technology

History, so often written by generals, is woven with armed conflict in all its forms. The European Middle Ages were an era of military skirmishes, powerful political figures, marauding knights, as well as common bandits. These deep societal and economic divides naturally manifested in the weapons and armour wielded by those caught up in the conflicts. While the level of technology was limited by the times, the form of combat, and the design and quality of both weapons and protective gear evolved considerably.

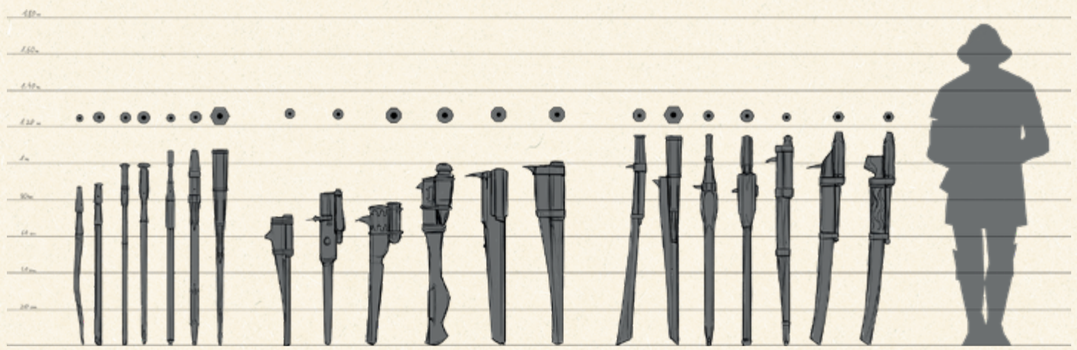
The rich arsenal of High Medieval weapons featured in Kingdom Come: Deliverance has been further expanded. New variants have been added across all categories – from swords, hammers, and axes, to polearms, shields of various shapes, and even siege equipment. At long last, the much-anticipated crossbow and towering pavise shield make their appearance. The era in which our story is set was one of tactical evolution, with early firearms slowly entering the battlefield. Metallurgy advanced alongside the emergence of battle-bred horses, redesigned war wagons, and the arrival of cannons.

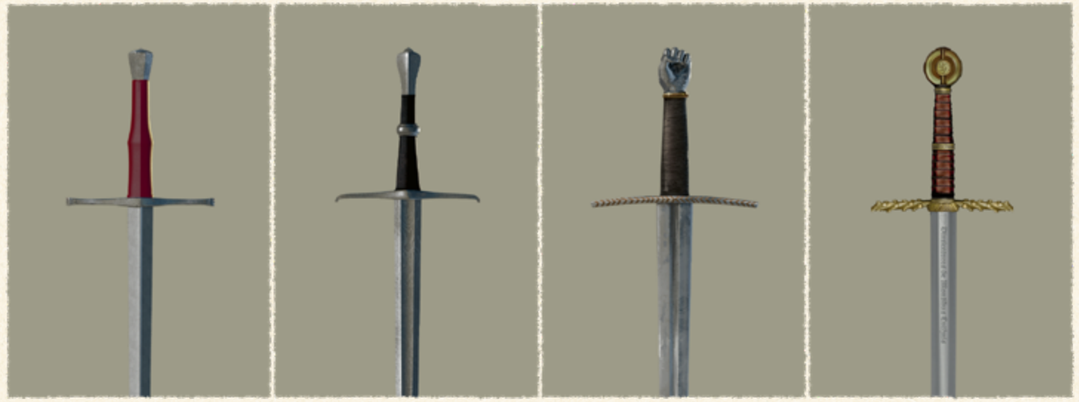
The European Middle Ages were marked by the dominance of the crossbow. It was easier to use than a bow and required significantly less training. However, with the rise of firearms, the use of crossbows gradually declined. From the 14th century onward, gunpowder-powered cannons – already known in China for quite some time – began appearing in Europe, along with the gradual spread of firearms. Records of handheld firearms being used in Bohemia date back to the reign of Wenceslas IV.



When designing weapons for Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, we first reviewed the processes used in the previous game. It was crucial to retain the dimensions of different weapon models and consult the animation team about common issues encountered in the past. Weapons in our game are not merely visual accessories. They must align with basic body movements and function properly in combat.

This required careful attention to the way weapons were held, carried, and represented in the user interface. Our work was made easier by maintaining a standard character height and following a few key design rules: with few exceptions, only men could carry weapons, all handheld weapons followed consistent dimensions, and they were presented in a uniform way when wielded by the player. Additionally, we had to address weapon scabbards, securing mechanisms, storage in armories and castles, and the creation of drop models. Every weapon had to match historical references in its shape, weight, and ornamentation, while also avoiding collision issues with Henry's body and clothing, or with those of other characters.





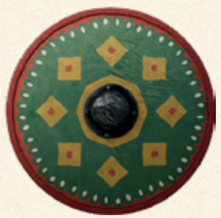
Some weapons were designed exclusively for unique characters, with decorations created using specialized techniques such as damascening – the process of inlaying and fusing metal patterns into the surface of another metal to create intricate designs. For ornamentation, we drew inspiration from period artifacts found in European museums and consulted expert craftsmen who create historical replicas for reenactments, as well as specialists in traditional sword fighting.

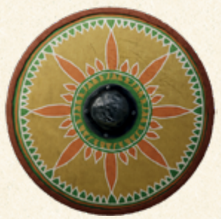
praga caput regni

praga
praga caput regni
praga caput regni
praga

A full suit of armor was something only a wealthy nobleman could afford. Most combatants wore only partial metal protection and relied more on combat technique than on their gear. In battles between lightly and heavily armored warriors, speed, agility, and cunning often proved decisive. That's why swordsmanship attracted even the lower classes, who gradually gained access to fencing schools.

The Cumans were a nomadic people belonging to the larger Kipchak (or Polovtsian) ethnic group from the Near East, who arrived in Europe in the 13th century. With the permission of King Béla IV, they settled in Hungary, where they later obtained an autonomous region known as Cumania. Their last major campaign into the Bohemian lands was alongside Sigismund of Luxembourg, who could hardly afford better mercenaries than the Cumans.





The Church

In the Middle Ages, the rhythm of day and night was guided not only by the sun but also by the sound of church bells. This subtle yet vital element of the world helped people navigate the flow of daily life. Bells signaled the start and end of work, warned of incoming danger – such as attacks or fires – and announced important events like the birth or death of a monarch. Under the supervision of local authorities and with the blessing of the highest power, God, the bells played an ever-present role in medieval society.

IV

Sacred Sites

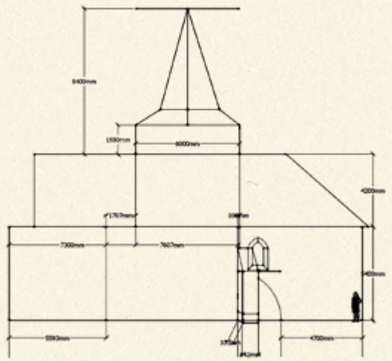
Faith was omnipresent, ensuring no one felt alone or lost. Everyone was expected to live in closeness to God, dedicate their life to Him, and trust that He would take care of them even after death. That's why almost every village, town, or city had places of worship, often built on the foundations of older pagan traditions that were gradually incorporated into Christian customs.

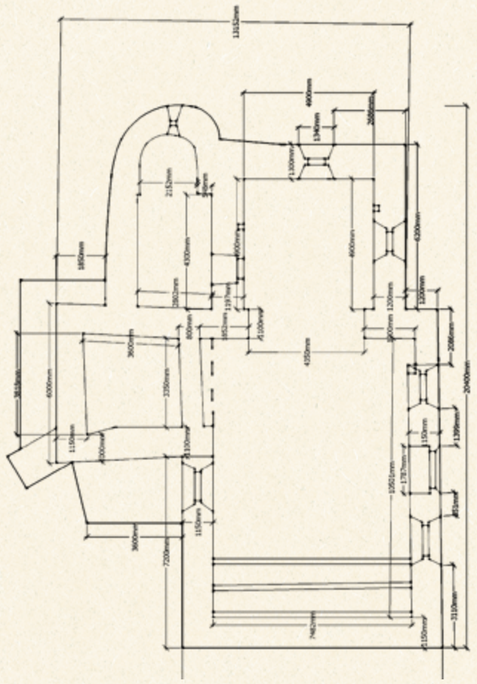
Where villages transformed into towns, churches and cathedrals were erected. Their grandeur depended on the generosity of local donors, mostly nobles and burghers who sought to secure their place in heaven through funding the construction of sacred buildings.

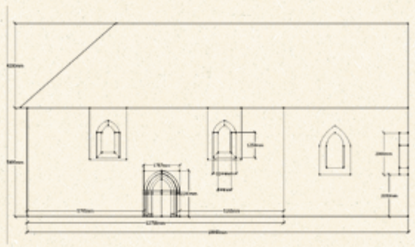
The largest religious structure in the game is the Sedletz Monastery. This vast complex even surpasses the Sasau Monastery, which was meticulously recreated in the first part of Henry's adventures. During development, we were forced to omit some of the more complex architectural sites in the Kuttenberg region due to time constraints. That allowed us to focus entirely on the city itself. As a result, the monastery remains only partially reconstructed, and players will have access only to the cemetery and one of Kuttenberg's most iconic landmarks – the Sedletz Ossuary. Accurately depicting this site required a thorough study of its history and the entire monastic complex. A great help in this endeavor was Professor Aleš Pospíšil, who has dedicated much of his scholarly career to uncovering the mysteries of Sedletz Monastery. Together, we discussed potential adjustments for the game and verified countless details about life within the monastery and its surroundings. Opening the gates of the monastery would require a significant amount of work, yet we would love to attempt a full reconstruction of this Cistercian residence as it stood at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries.

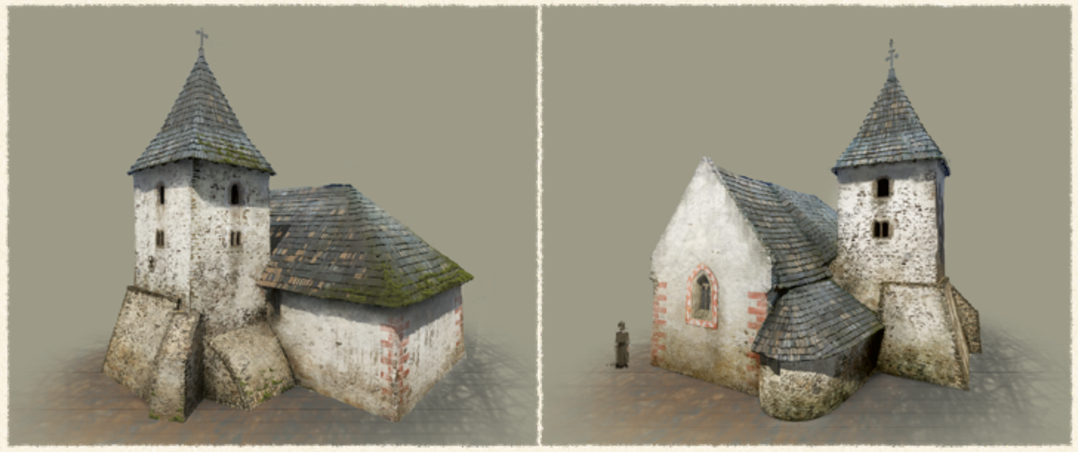
Kuttenberg in the game offers more than just a vivid overview of fashion, daily routines, food, and architecture across different social classes – it also presents a glimpse into the coexistence of various cultures and religions. Upon entering the royal city, players will immediately notice numerous Christian churches, but they will also come across a medieval synagogue, the most important building of the Jewish community, located just beyond the gate leading to the Jewish ghetto. Creating the Jewish quarter in Kuttenberg was a significant challenge as historical records from the early 15th century are practically nonexistent. We had to make several key decisions. How many people would live there? Was the ghetto separated from the rest of the city? Did the Jewish community have its own cemetery?

Ultimately, we drew inspiration from similar areas in Prague, Kraków, and Erfurt. The synagogue became the heart of the district, serving not only as a place of prayer, but also as a center for learning, where people studied religion and learned to read from the Torah. The local rabbi held the role of spiritual authority and was responsible for making important decisions for the Jewish community.

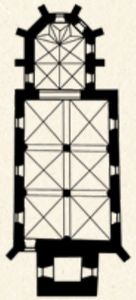






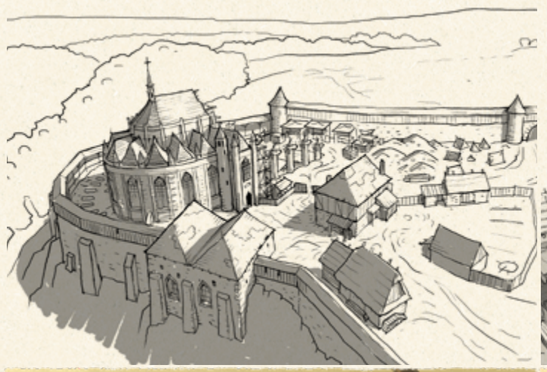


Unfortunately, the churches of Kuttenberg can be admired only from the outside. However, thanks to the excellent preservation work of heritage specialists, we were able to faithfully recreate their authentic 3D models. Historical vedute – drawings and paintings depicting the panoramas of Kuttenberg – provided valuable references for the reconstruction of the silhouettes of religious buildings, as well as the shapes of their roofs and windows. In their creation, we faced several design decisions: where to use glass, which was still a novelty in Central European construction at the time; what shape to give the doors and various decorative elements that have since been lost; and whether to add cemeteries, morgues, or parsonages.

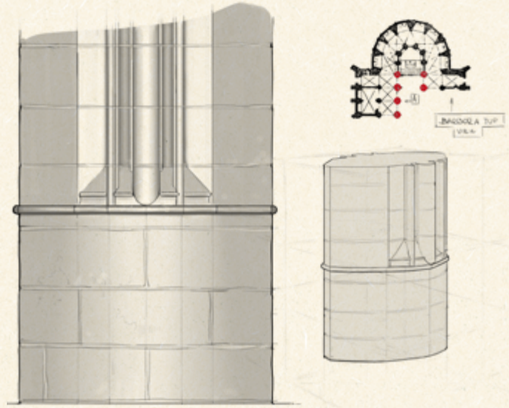


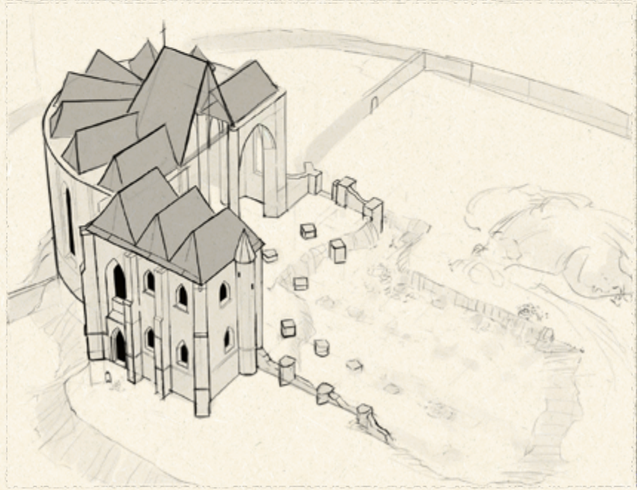
Each of Kuttenberg's churches played an important role in medieval society. In addition to their religious and social significance, they also contributed to the character and beauty of the city's districts. For those sacred buildings that did not survive to this day, such as the Church of St. John the Baptist or St. Bartholomew's Church, we had more creative freedom in making design decisions for the game.

The most famous and iconic of all, the Church of St. Barbara, was still under construction during the time in which Kingdom Come: Deliverance II is set. The responsible building guild likely awaited further funding, while the surrounding area was being ravaged by Sigismund's army. Even the transport of building materials to the city must have been difficult under such conditions.



Nevertheless, it was hard not to include this monumental and symbolic structure in the game, especially knowing that today it is visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. The wreath of chapels, the large windows, the grand altars – all this splendor, sadly, remains behind closed doors in the game.





Faith

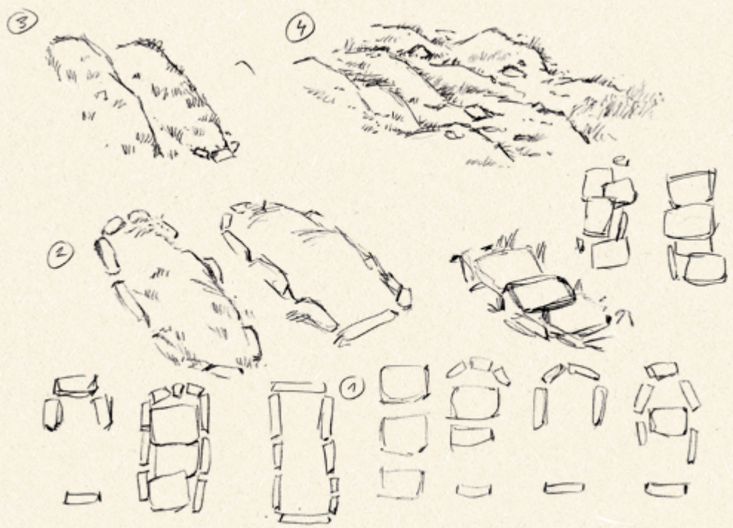
In our world, Christianity is the dominant faith, but we must not forget pagan traditions and widespread medieval superstition. Medieval piety was not purely material, even though the donations of nobles and burghers, according to papal indulgences, were meant to secure salvation. The earliest societies believed in realms beyond the earthly world, subordinating their lives to rituals and rules dictated by higher powers.

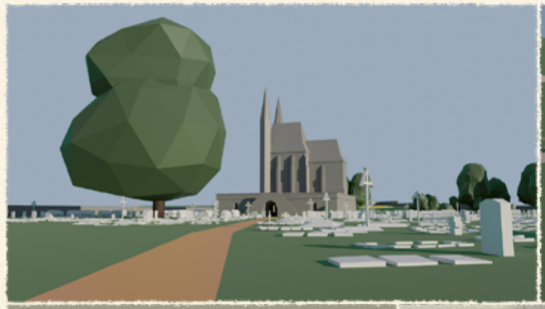
Humans first found peace in the worship of nature, whose forces far surpassed human understanding. Later, they sought protection in divine pantheons. Invocations and pleas for help in daily hardship soon evolved into prayers. Altar sacrifices followed, along with traditional ceremonies. With the arrival of Christianity, the number and form of supernatural forces were reduced to one, and the need arose to organize the worshipers.

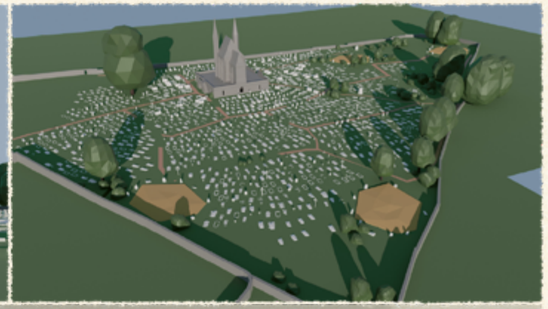
Conciliation crosses served as a form of penance. Sinful Christians erected them to seek forgiveness from both God and the wronged souls of others. Chapels and wayside shrines were like spiritual phone booths offering refuge to any weary traveler. Erecting crosses and chapels along roads is a tradition still visible in the Czech landscape today. Who knows how far back this tradition truly goes? And so, hidden idols of old gods, secretly worshipped by some, may still be found in the game. Where communities couldn't afford to build stone churches, at least small wooden chapels were erected. Places of prayer were marked by crosses or wayside shrines. In some areas, people raised burial mounds, where the dead could leave this world in peace.

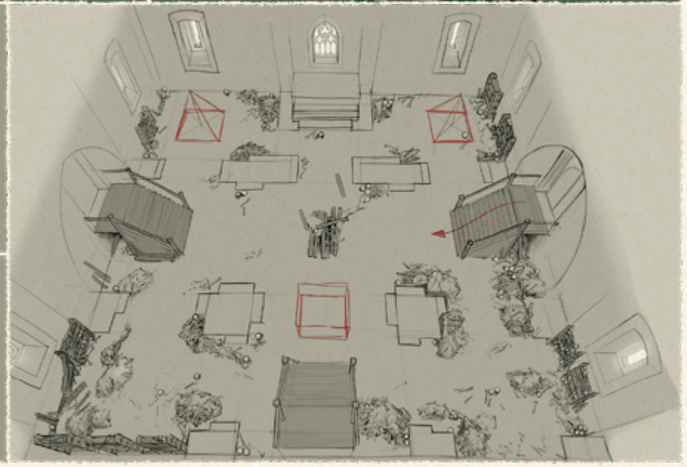
Only the most precious materials and finest craftsmanship were considered worthy of honoring God. At the same time, the Church gained majesty and influence as the mediator of divine law. In Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, we aimed to capture the triumph of medieval architecture through grand religious buildings. But where would these be without the crafts that ensured their lasting beauty?

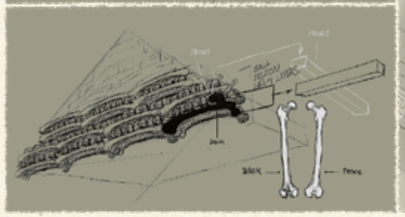
One of the most striking ways of praising God was painting. However, medieval artists did not work on canvas; their paintings adorned the walls of chapels, churches, and other religious buildings, or were created on wooden panels for altarpieces. These lavishly decorated spaces offered an escape from everyday reality. Here, people truly felt they entered the kingdom of God.











It may come as a surprise that Christian burial customs changed frequently. Cemeteries were typically located near churches, on consecrated ground. Over time, graves were often dug up, relocated, and expanded, with decorative elements gradually added. We can't be sure of the original layout, grave orientation, or even the now-common practice of placing a cross at the head of the deceased. Studies of medieval cemeteries revealed that it was crucial to bury the dead as close to the church presbytery as possible, with their heads facing west. Victims of famine or plague were often buried in mass graves. Once the designated burial spaces were filled, the remains were exhumed and stored in ossuaries. Only a few could afford the luxury of a coffin burial. Different burial customs applied to Jewish cemeteries and the Jewish faith, which we could only reflect marginally in the game.

Some sought salvation in the church, while others had to atone for their sins before the local bailiff or provincial lord. Ultimately, it came down to one's noble blood and the number of silver groschen in their purse. But wealth did not always guarantee peace of mind or a sense of absolution. The sight of a pillory or stocks, and the presence of guards – both in the town and around the fortress – served as deterrents against breaking the law. Poor offenders faced corporal punishment, while the wealthy risked losing their property and enduring public humiliation.

As we already know from Henry's own story, serious crimes were punished by brutal torture or even death. One of the most chilling places is the original execution site near Kuttenberg. On the gallows hill, in addition to the gallows itself, we see the wheel – a device used for the gruesome practice of execution by breaking. The executioner would shatter the convict's limbs, ribs, and sometimes even their spine before weaving the broken body into a wooden wheel. This wheel, often with the victim still alive, was then hoisted onto a tall pole and left on display as a chilling warning to others.

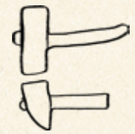
Kuttenberg

The city of Kuttenberg represents the pinnacle of our artistic, technical, and design ambitions. Translating any real medieval town into a game world is a major challenge. Even during the early stages of development of the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance, we knew Kuttenberg would eventually become a key piece for the next installment. In comparison, Rattay was just a modest fortified village, so this time we aimed to create something grander and architecturally richer. Kuttenberg plays a key role in the story and, historically, was a hotbed of political conflict where the Sedletz Monastery, the king, and the most influential citizens competed for power. Our goal was to immerse the player in this conflict, whose consequences stretched far beyond the region itself.

V

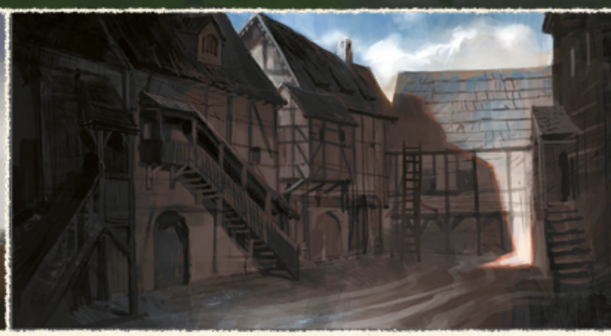
Founding of the City

As creators committed to historical accuracy, we initially set out to gather as many sources as possible, including books, scientific studies, archaeological and architectural surveys, and original medieval documents. However, we were surprised to discover that only a small number of historical sources regarding Kuttenberg had survived. What we had were fragmented, often contradictory records, which needed to be sorted and interpreted. When sources clashed, we had to make educated choices.



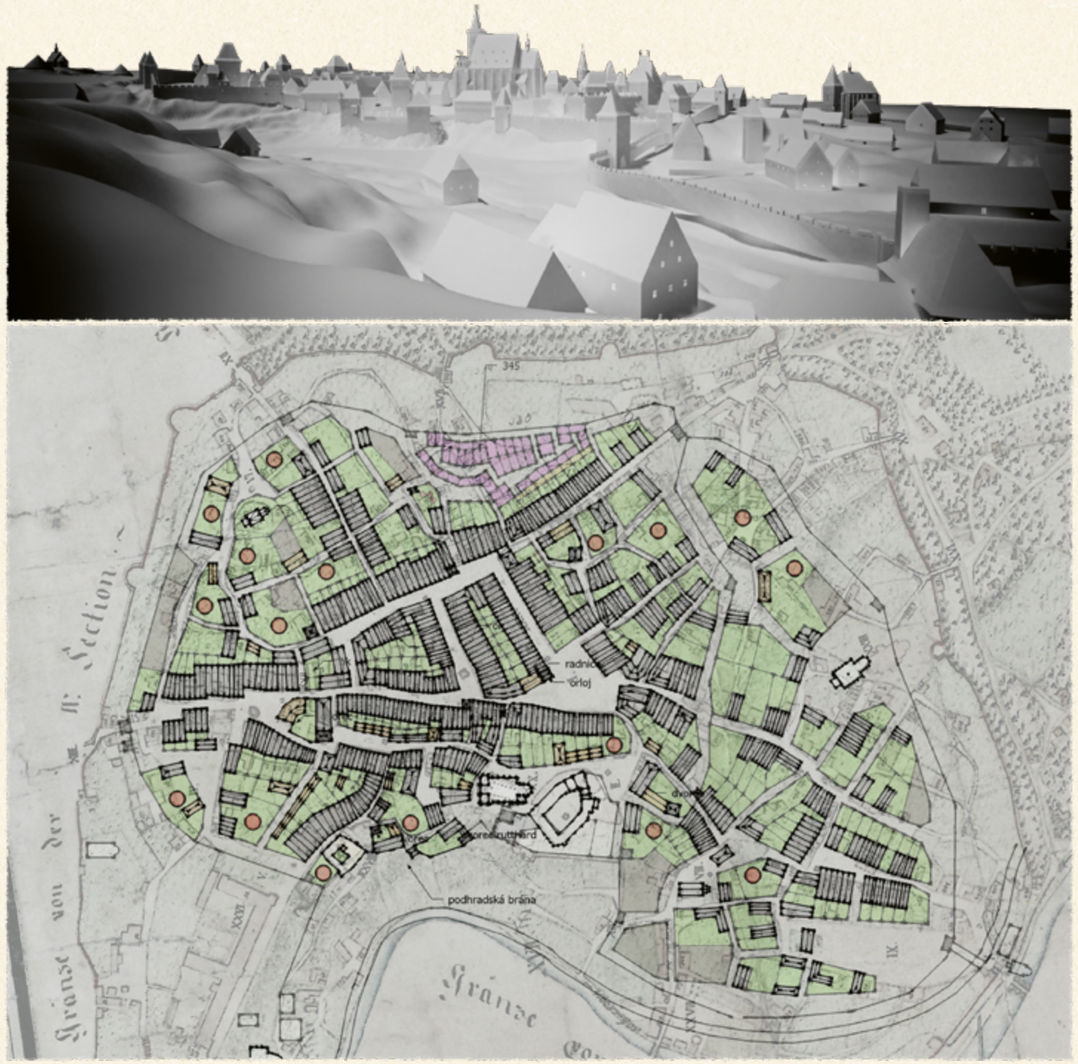
One major decision was the question of scale. How big would our in-game Kuttenberg be? Reproducing a city of tens of thousands of people and hundreds of NPCs was inconceivable. We initially set a goal of 350 plots, each containing a primary structure (mostly residential) and auxiliary buildings like barns or sheds. The layout of the city was built around historically documented landmarks such as churches, Hrádek, and the Wallachian Court. One of our most crucial sources was a historical map of the town's cellars, which lined up remarkably well with both the oldest preserved maps and the current street grid. These plots were designated for houses with at least a stone ground floor. At this point in time, we made a design decision, which significantly influenced the final appearance. Buildings would vary in character depending on the district, helping players navigate what would otherwise feel like a vast urban sprawl.

Even at this point, we were limited by technology and forced to scale the whole city down once again. The number of plots dropped to 150, which became a number that was feasible but still preserved the feeling of a large city.

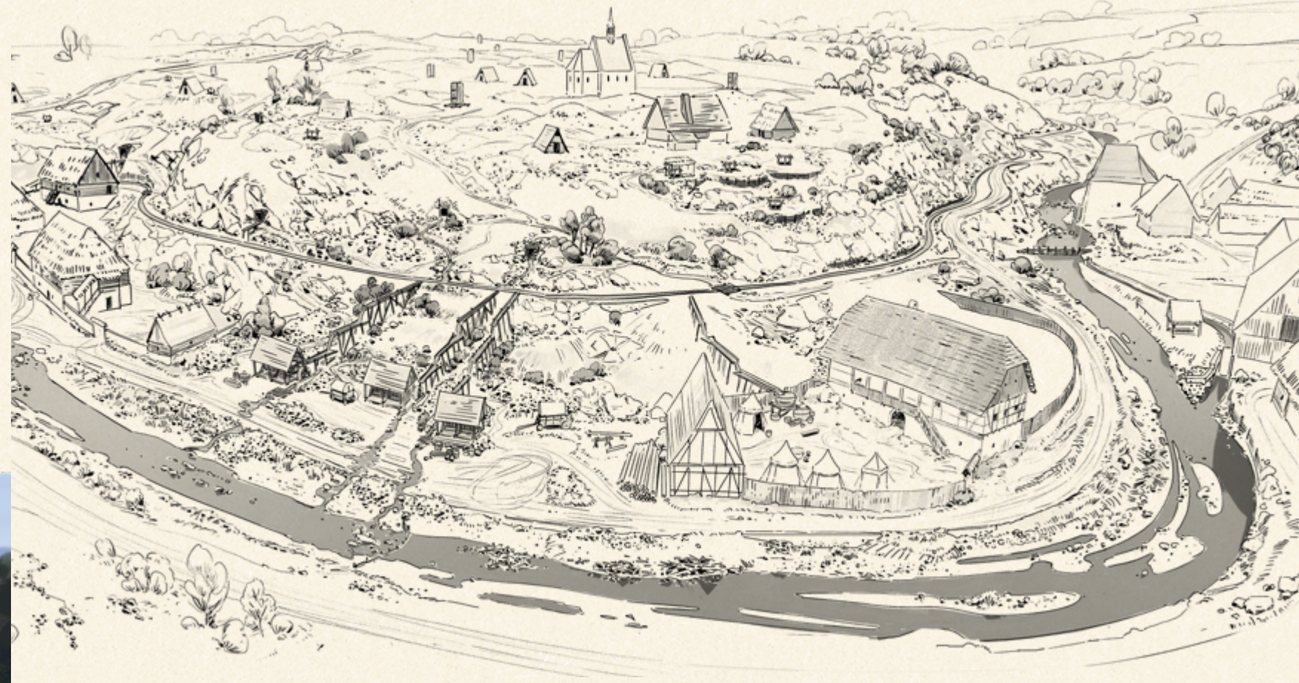


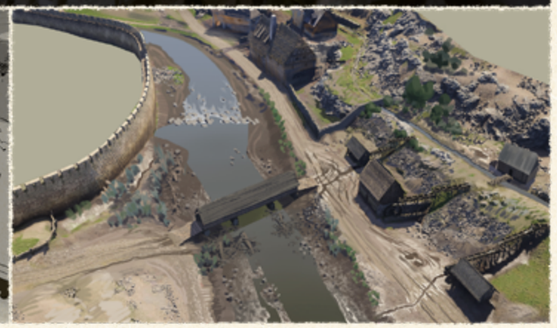
After significant reduction, we had to approach development more as artists than as historians filling in the blanks. We faced the decision of how to fit our vision, based on historical resources, into a smaller layout. What could remain in its place stayed, and what was sacrificed, we tried to at least hint at. Often, a single building had to represent more than two real ones. We preserved as much of the city's character as possible, and each architectural detail was chosen to match the period. Unlike Rattay, Kuttenberg had to feel like a step forward. A city on a different scale, visually and culturally. It was clear we couldn't reconstruct every district in full, limited not only by historical records but also by the level of detail set by the first game.

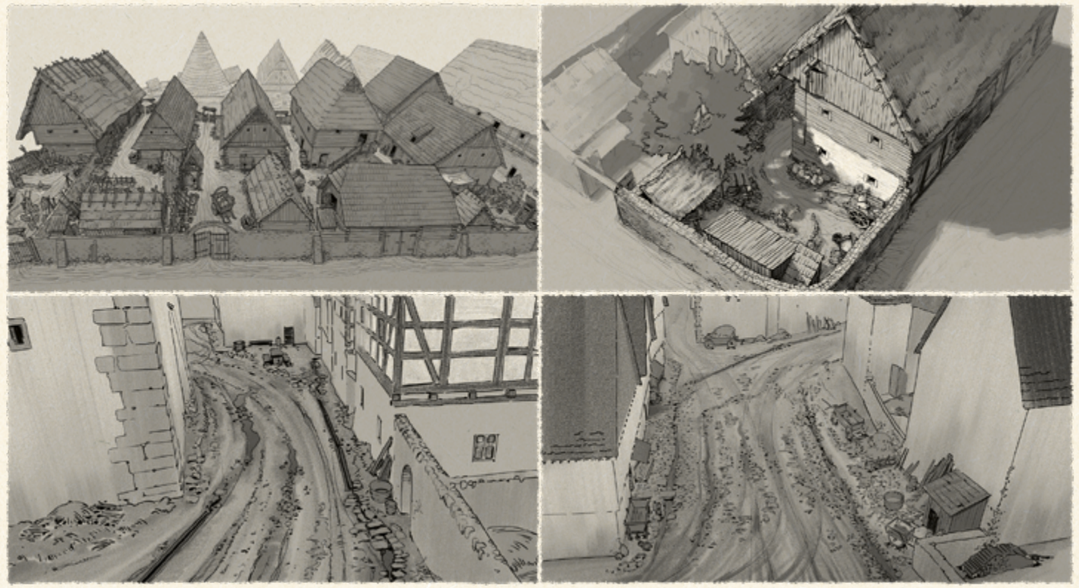
Compared to the previous installment, Kuttenberg was vastly different. Players had already visited Rattay – a town encircled by high walls, featuring two castles and several churches, with a central marketplace adorned by a tight row of multi-storey arcaded houses. If Kuttenberg was to represent an evolutionary step forward, this fact had to be reflected in its design. While we aimed for the highest historical accuracy, the available sources simply didn't allow us to recreate larger city sections. In many ways, we were limited not only by historical records themselves, but also by the level of detail established in the first game.

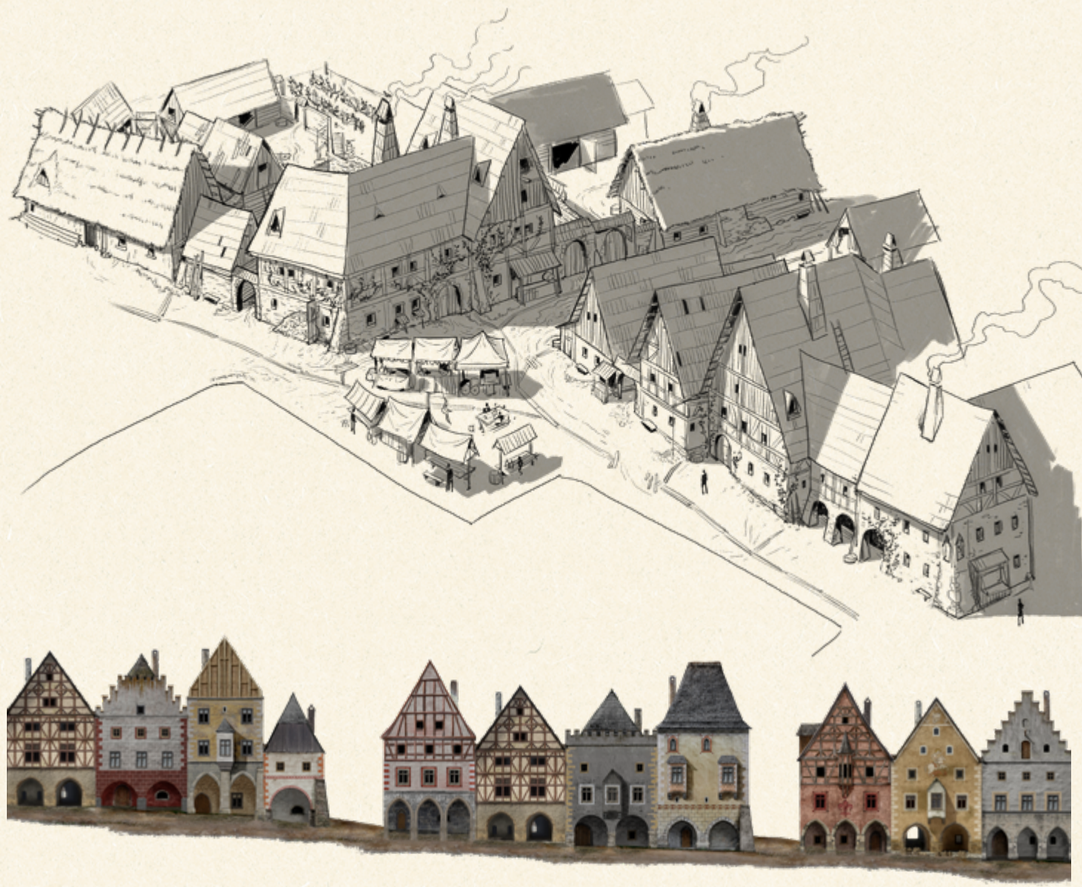


Most medieval settlements formed near rivers, and Kuttenberg is no exception. It owes its existence to the Vrchlice river, though in our time period, locals called it Bach. Why? Perhaps because its meanders resembled long, winding sleeves (called páchy in Czech), or maybe because the beer brewed from its water smelled horrible (as pach translates to a bad odor). The water was definitely not clean. The surroundings of the city were polluted by mining. Drainage channels were deliberately constructed, and underground water was brought to the surface. Silver mining also released poisonous arsenic into the environment. Although the river's stream originates at the edge of the map, several springs and brooks strengthen it along the way. Evidence suggests it once carried much more water. The still-visible reservoirs and remains of water-management structures suggest that the river regularly flooded. However, people had to tame it, evidenced not only by numerous mill remains but also by dense settlement along its banks, as documented by period sources.

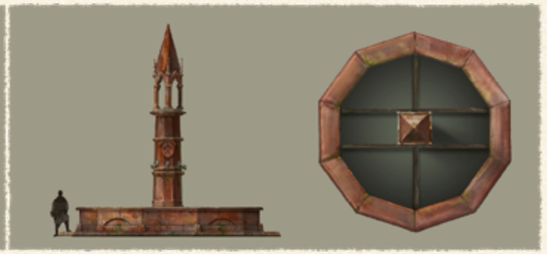






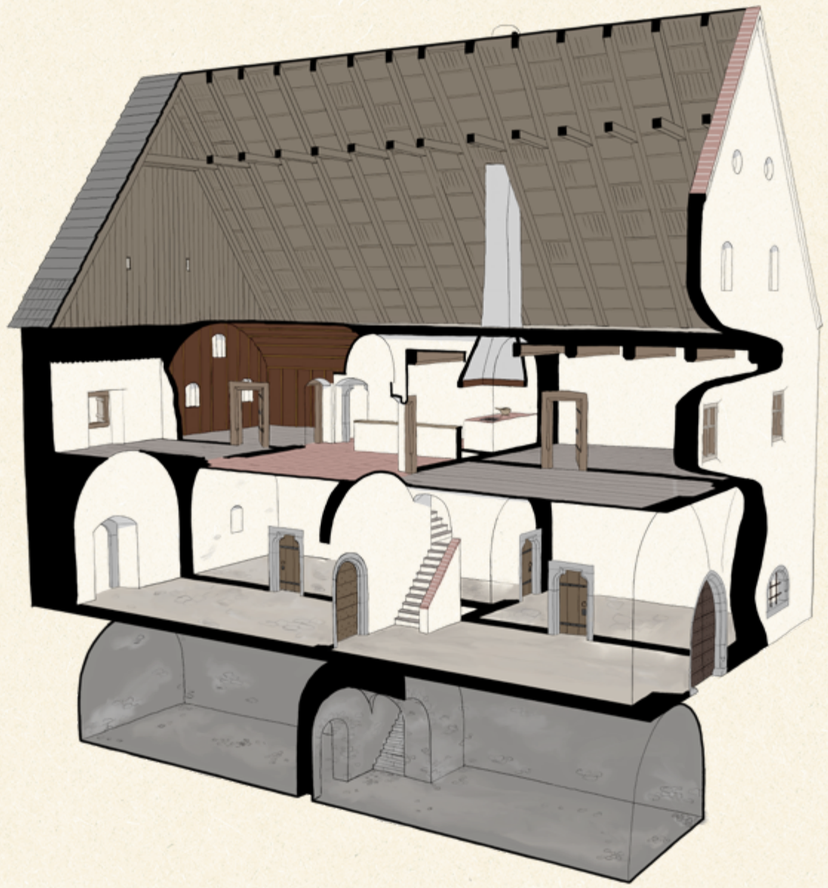


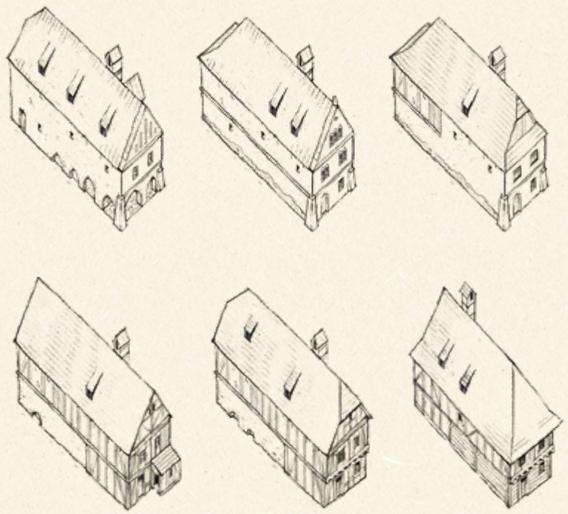
The city's structure was based on the cellar map, which surprisingly aligned with both the oldest surviving maps and the current street structure. To make Kuttenberg feel like a bustling metropolis, even after its reduction, we emphasized its verticality and density. The center features closed-block construction with multi-story houses and arcades, enhancing the impression of wealth. Towards the gates, however, the buildings gradually become more dispersed. Houses shrink, and individual neighborhoods with their own character and function emerge.

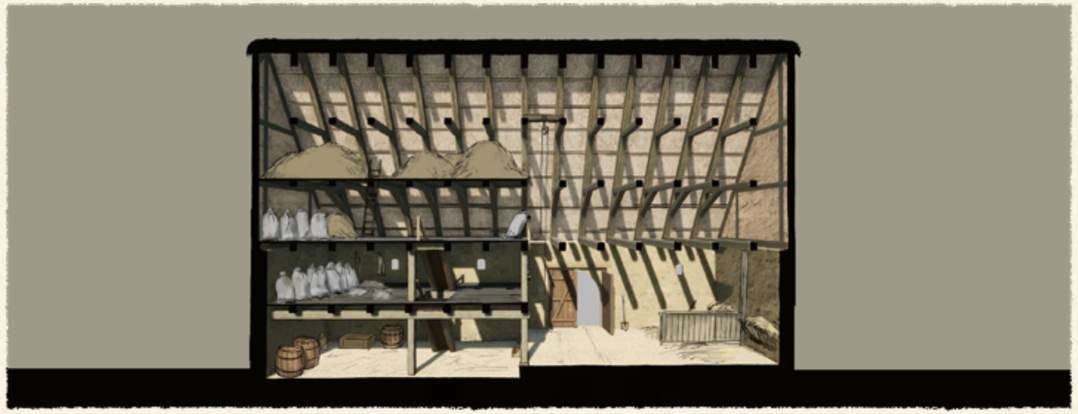


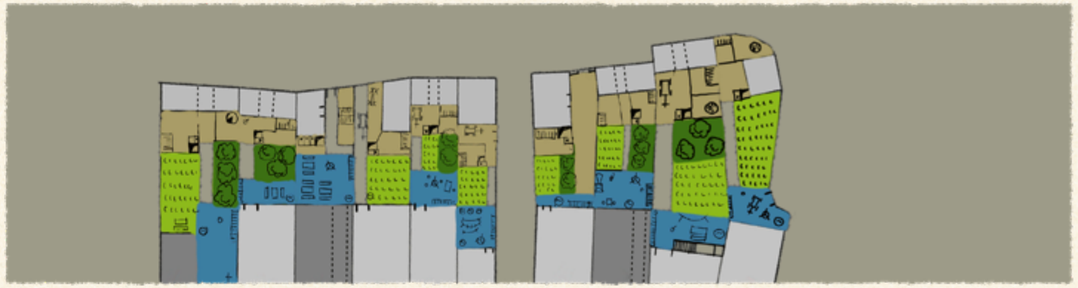
Exterior decorations were a vital part of medieval architecture. The Bohemian region was relatively poor, so most homeowners couldn't afford elaborate stone-carved façades. They tried to compensate for this with painted decorations.

It was common to highlight window openings and corners of houses, sometimes with a simple outline. More elaborate murals mimicked stone blocks, floral patterns, or heraldry. The most luxurious decorations featured richly colored figurative scenes taken from legends, daily life, or patron saints.







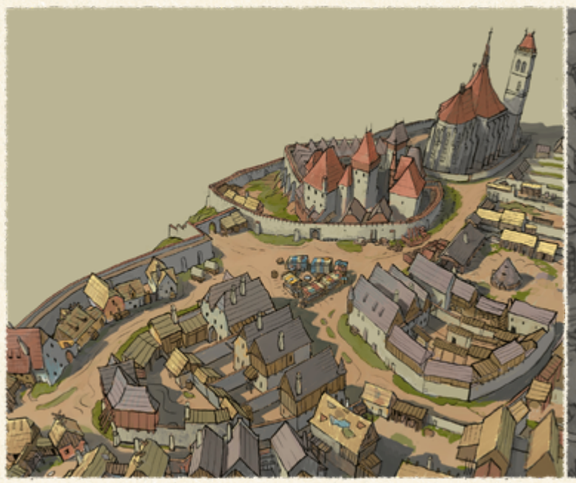


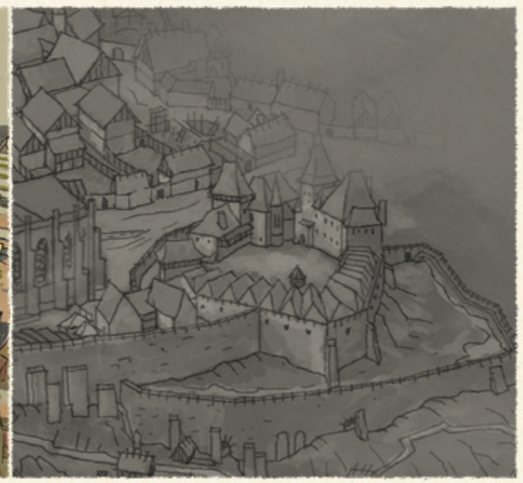
řemeslná část
hospodářská část
nízký zeleň
vzrostlá zeleň
dvoukolák
povoz krytý
povoz otevřený
latrýna
odpadní jímka
káď s vodou
štípací špalek
záhon
strom (jen nižší ovocné)
ohniště s kotlíkem
prádlo
chlebová pec

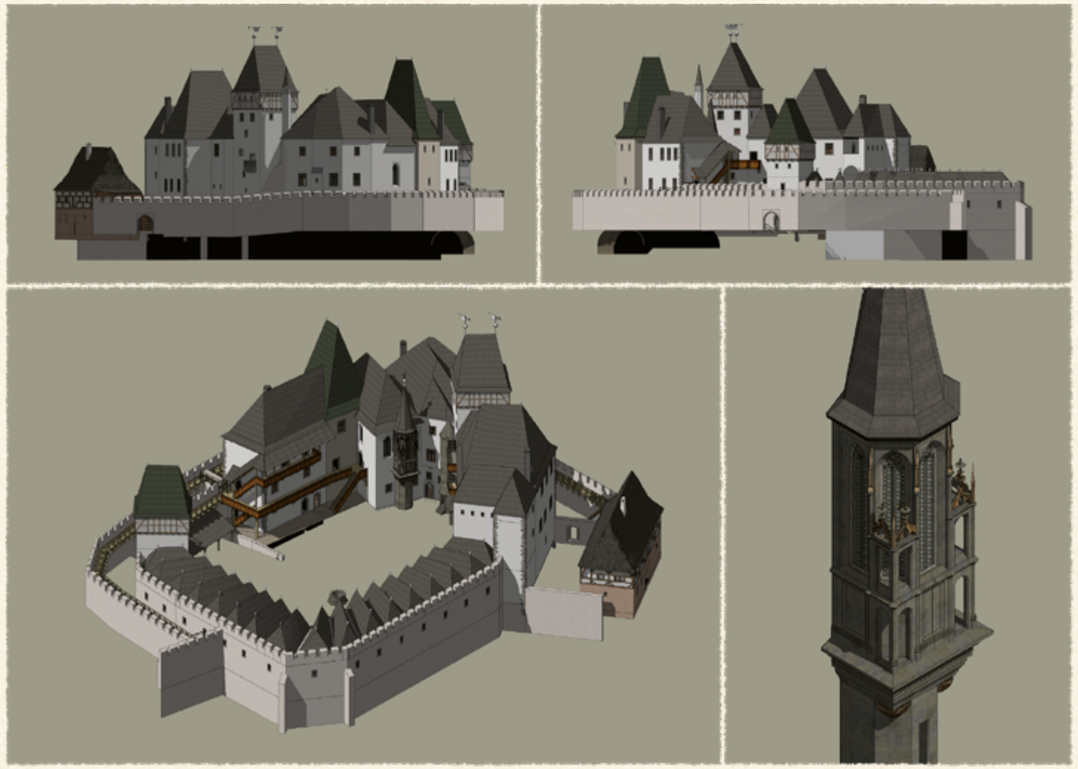
Architecture

Cities like Kuttenberg present a challenge not only due to its historical significance, but also because it served as a gallery of medieval architectural achievements. The town boasts many lavish buildings with sophisticated layouts tailored to the lives of the nobility and wealthy merchants. A strong sense of detail and beauty takes precedence over the functional simplicity typically seen in rural settlements.

King Wenceslas IV apparently loved money so much that he insisted on personally overseeing coin minting. We can't think of any other reason he would have moved his court from comfortable Prague to such a place. The Wallachian Court is essentially a luxurious money factory. It was a closed ecosystem. Silver ore was brought here, and finished Prague groschen left its gates. Wenceslas even had a residential palace built inside, complete with a richly decorated chapel and a vaulted treasury, which would become an alluring target for Henry and his companions.



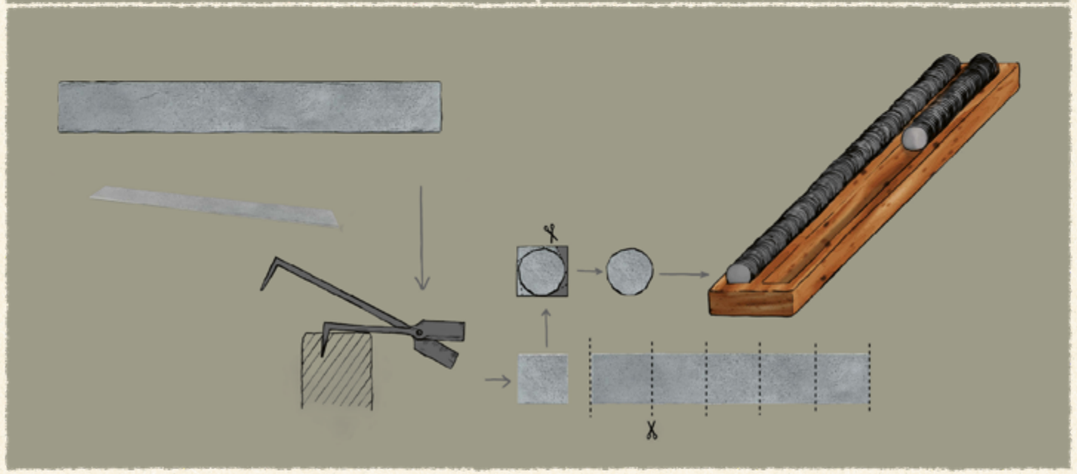


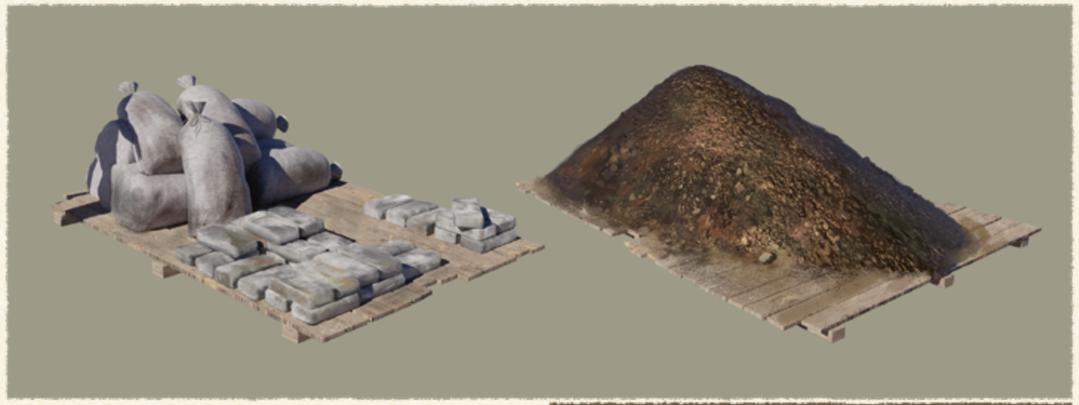


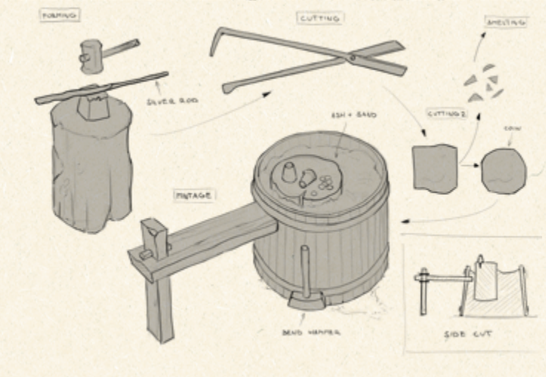
When we set aside the most opulent noble and ecclesiastical buildings, construction was relatively straightforward. The main building materials were wood and stone. As Bohemia was a relatively poor region, the most common building technique involved timber log structures, often using only roughly hewn wood. Stone, mainly unworked and sourced locally, was used for wall construction, while wealthier homes sometimes featured stone vaults.

Interestingly, even vaulted ceilings were occasionally made of wood, particularly in so-called dýmné jizby (rooms designed to heat the building), which were often vaulted with wooden barrel vaults and recognizable by their characteristic pyramid-like arrangement of windows. All surfaces, regardless of type, were covered with layers of plaster – sometimes to smooth uneven textures, and other times to conceal them entirely. Only door and window frames could be crafted by stonemasons and, as a result, could remain in their raw state. However, they were often painted. Elaborate construction was limited to a few buildings. As a result, builders focused on details that required precision or visual appeal, especially in religious structures, which reflected the collective pride of society. The more communities wished to represent themselves, the greater the effort invested in these buildings.

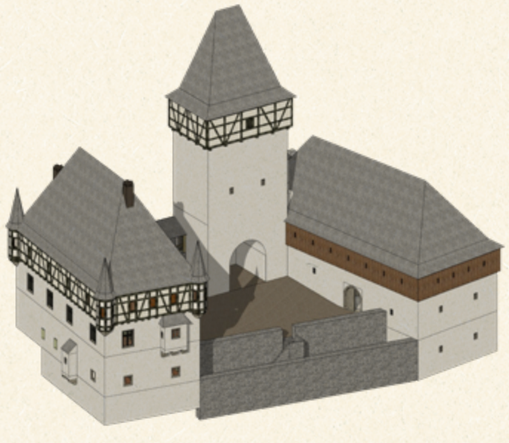
Among the most distinctive features were richly profiled traceried windows filled with glass – at the time a luxury that often exceeded the cost of constructing even several city houses. However, players will still encounter decorative stonework throughout the city. On a corner, one might find a niche with a statue, elsewhere a stone bay window or an intricately crafted fountain, with water flowing from who knows where.



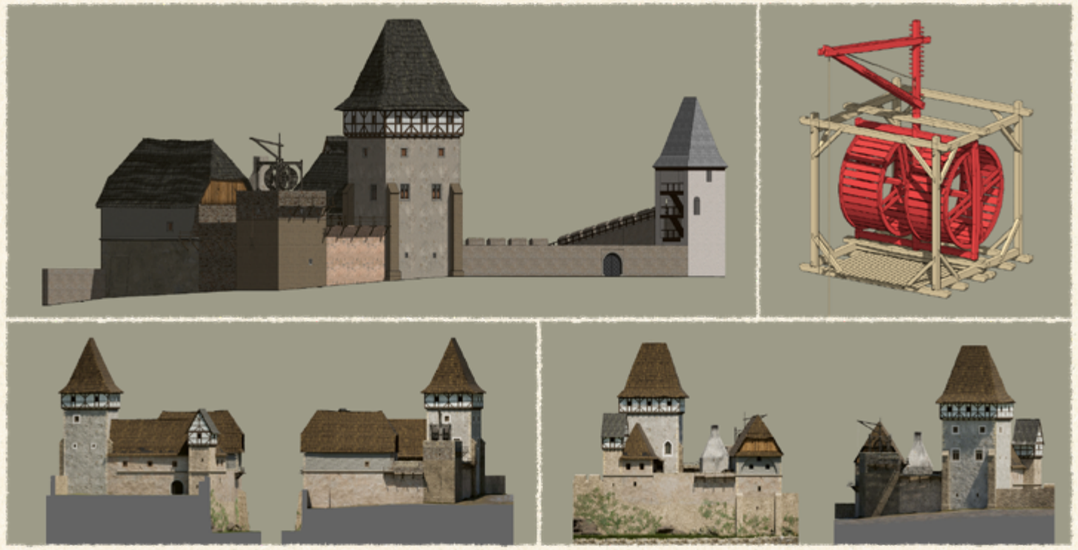




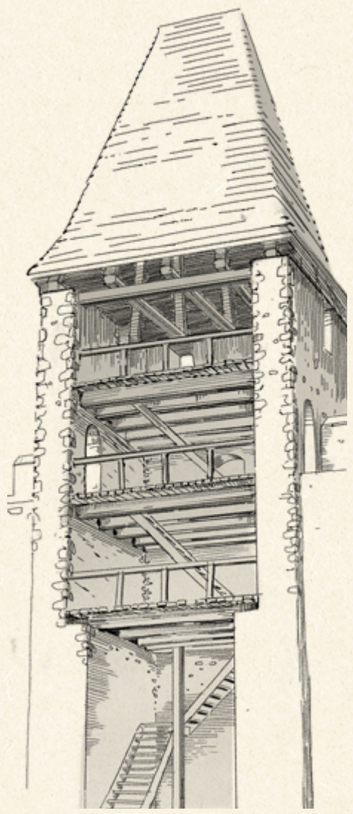
We know little about the former palace of one of Kuttenberg's most powerful patrician families. Even the oldest illustrations show the building already in ruins. Its collapse likely resulted from unstable, undermined ground. Still, available sources suggest it was a vast, wealthy estate, dominated by a tall gate tower and a multi-story palace wing extending from the west.



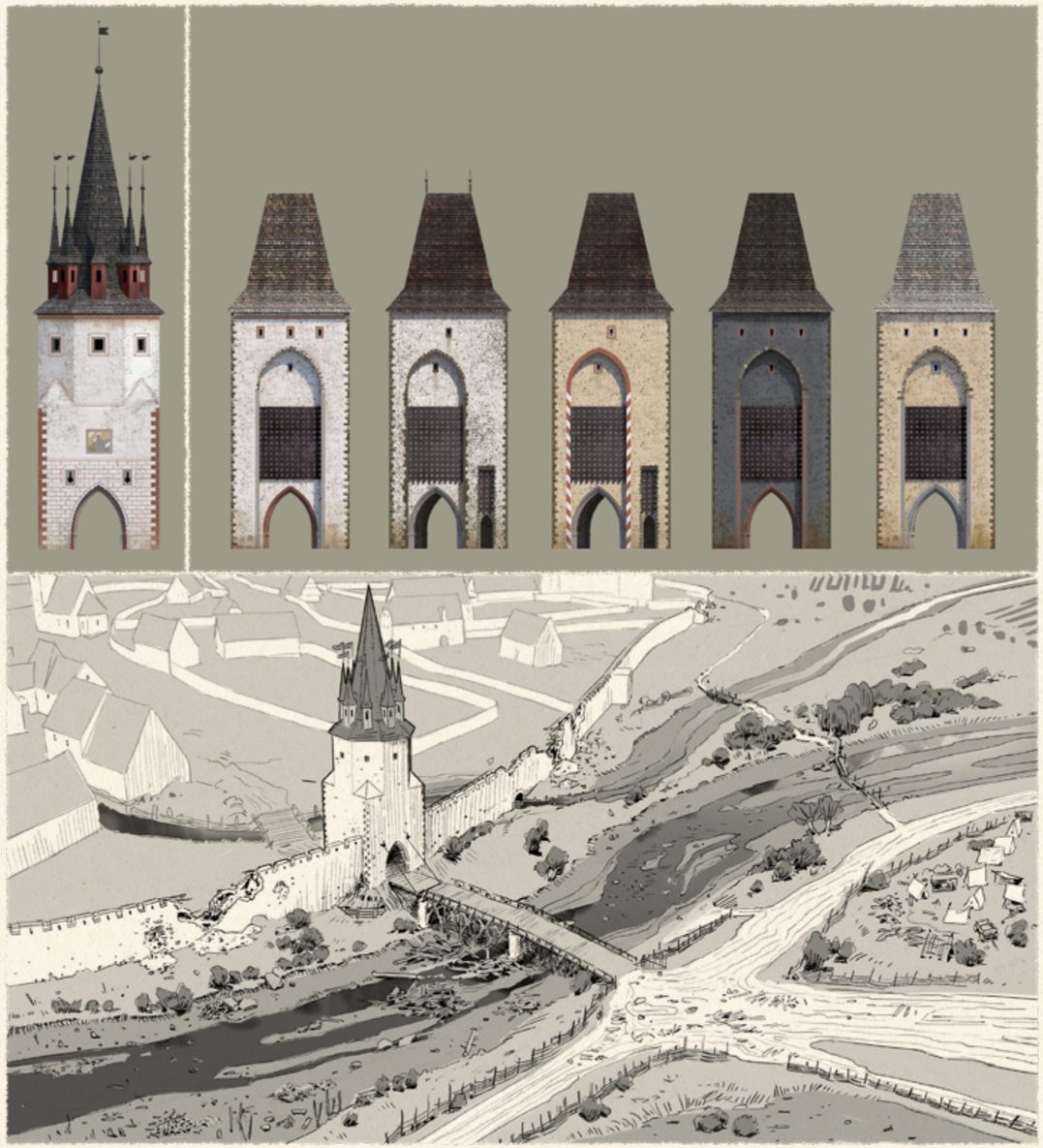
In our time period, Hrádek had not yet gained the significance it would later acquire. Its importance grew over time, possibly by chance. We depict the Hrádek during a period of transition. Its main residential tower already stands, while the surrounding structures are either in their original state or in the process of being rebuilt. Some parts were again taken from later depictions. Historically, the site had just been purchased by the Donín family, and the royal bailiff Václav was beginning an ambitious reconstruction.



The walls of Kuttenberg have undergone many changes throughout history. The most information and the most noticeable remnants relate to a neo-Gothic reconstruction that took place more than a hundred years after the game's events. Therefore, the city before the reconstruction likely had a much more modest appearance than what we are accustomed to seeing in depictions of cities from the peak of the Middle Ages.



The design of the gates evolved through several conflicting design trends. Each gate needed to be differentiated so that players would know from which direction they were approaching and which part of the city they were entering. At the same time, we had to limit the number of unique 3D models. Initially, we considered having some gates close at night, with a pedestrian door players could use to sneak in. However, this idea was eventually abandoned. Instead, we focused on differentiating the gates through variations in plaster color and surface decoration – features supported by examples from better-preserved medieval city walls in Central Europe.



Characters

At Warhorse Studios, our goal from the very beginning was to reconstruct the events of 1403 not solely through real historical figures, but from the perspective of someone players can relate to today. After all, relying entirely on historical personalities would have quickly brought us up against a wall, since biographical gaps would have made storytelling difficult, and unanswered questions would have only multiplied, often with no clear resolution. By intertwining the fates of fictional heroes with authentic historical figures, we are able to explore the challenges and traditions of different social classes. This opened up an endless horizon of possibilities for players to experience the medieval world firsthand.

In Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, you will reunite with familiar and beloved characters. Besides Henry, there's his companion Hans Capon, of course, who leads the party dispatched at the end of the first game to Trosky Castle. You are also going to encounter Sir Hanush, Godwin, and even Jobst of Moravia himself.

However, many new characters will also appear, influencing the story and leaving a lasting mark on our hero's journey.

VI

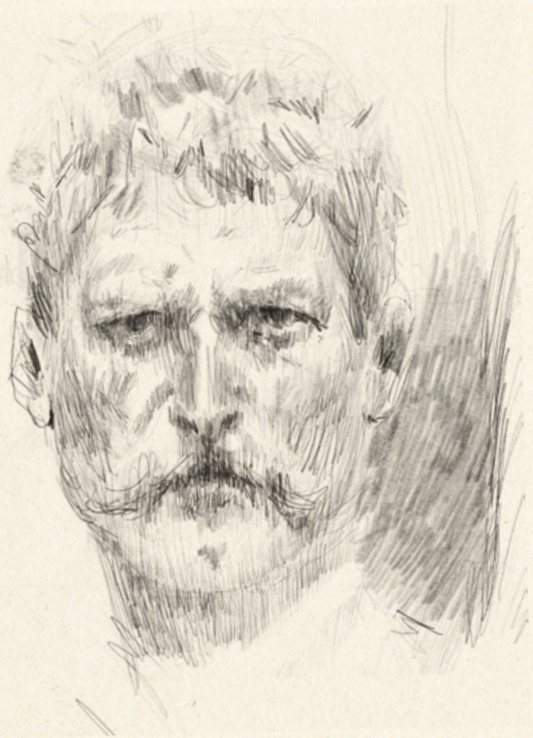
Historical Figures

We knew that immersing oneself into the medieval world wouldn't be easy for modern people - especially without iconic figures who shaped the history of Central Europe. However, chronicles and historical records are filled with mentions of unusually powerful noble families, brave warriors, and charismatic leaders who either inspired or terrified, but without a doubt shaped the lives of the people of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Alongside written sources, which served as the foundation for portraying these characters, we also enjoyed studying historical paintings, miniatures, engravings, and seals. Thanks to these, we discovered many other fascinating elements, sometimes even the possible appearance of specific historical figures.

In the end, medieval art didn't always stick to realism, which is why we didn't treat every single image we found as the absolute truth. We were pleasantly surprised that even some modern-day fans of the Middle Ages have attempted to depict historical figures and shared their interpretations with us.

Jan Zizka of Trotznov

The man who became the face of the Hussite movement remains a mystery since only the last six years of his life have been thoroughly documented. As for his youth, we know that he lost an eye and that around 1408 he served as a bandit in a raiding company led by a certain Matej. Historical records also tell us that when he was later captured and sentenced, king Wenceslas IV granted him a pardon. This led to the theory that at least some of his activities may have been carried out at the behest of someone close to the king – which is a theory we have chosen to follow. In the game, we present Zizka as he begins preparing for the most renowned stage of his life, a time when he is gaining experience on his path to becoming the leader of the rebellious Hussite armies and a man who would go on to earn a reputation as a brilliant strategist and an undefeated commander.



Jobst of Moravia

Jobst became Margrave of Moravia in 1375, and by 1388, he had also held the title of Margrave of Brandenburg. For a brief period of fifteen weeks between 1410 and 1411, Jobst even ruled as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. This makes him one of the most powerful and historically significant figures to appear in the game. Cousin to Kings Wenceslas and Sigismund of Luxembourg, Jobst became a key ally in the struggle for the Bohemian crown. Moreover, according to documented historical sources, he likely possessed the qualities and abilities necessary to lead Bohemia. One could say he is the architect of the entire story of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II as it is he who sends Henry and Sir Capon on their mission to Trosky, and it is he who arrives at the end with his army to save the day. It is no coincidence that we gave him the face of Martin Frývaldský, CEO of Warhorse Studios.

Radzig Kobyla

Radzig Kobyla was a Bohemian yeoman and royal hetman of King Wenceslas IV. From 1410 to 1415, he served as burgrave of Vyšehrad. In 1403, he resided at the castle in Silver Skalitz, overseeing silver mining operations. The king was known for favoring the lower nobility, granting high offices in return for loyalty. Radzig was likely one of these favorites and is believed to have been a personal friend of the king. In 1403, Silver Skalitz was burned to the ground by King Sigismund and his Cuman forces. For his loyal service, Wenceslas IV granted Radzig permission to build his own castle in Veselí nad Sázavou. He was killed in 1416 in a tavern in Kuttenberg by an angry mob of miners incited by local priests.

Hanusz of Leipa

We became well acquainted with Hanusz, wealthy eccentric nobleman and uncle and guardian of young Hans Capon, during the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance. Since then, he has undergone a significant transformation. Not as dramatic as his historical counterpart, who descended from a respected figure into a robber knight later in life, but a change nonetheless. Hanush has received historically more accurate clothing that reflects his original portrayal, and his character model has been newly scanned and enhanced with much improved facial animation. Our goal was to address the shortcomings of the original head and body model by taking advantage of better technology and a larger team of artists dedicated to character design. Fortunately, even after all these years, it wasn't difficult for us to find the original face reference for Hanush once again.

Jan Semine

Although there are a few mentions of the House of Semine, which was likely based at a small fortress in Semine around the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, all historical records are, at best, fragmentary. This gave us the opportunity to shape both the appearance and character of this house from the ground up, building on our knowledge of the era's social context, fashion, and the status such a house would have held.

John II of Liechtenstein

The Liechtensteins were a very wealthy noble family, closely aligned with the Luxembourg dynasty and supporters of King Wenceslas IV of Bohemia. Jan's appearance has undergone one of the most significant transformations since the first game. From a minor side character, he has grown into one of the key players. He may not be present throughout the entire story, but he appears during the most crucial parts. He was therefore given clothing and a hairstyle befitting a young nobleman of high rank, whose most powerful weapon is not the sword, but his intellect.

Hynek “Dry Devil”

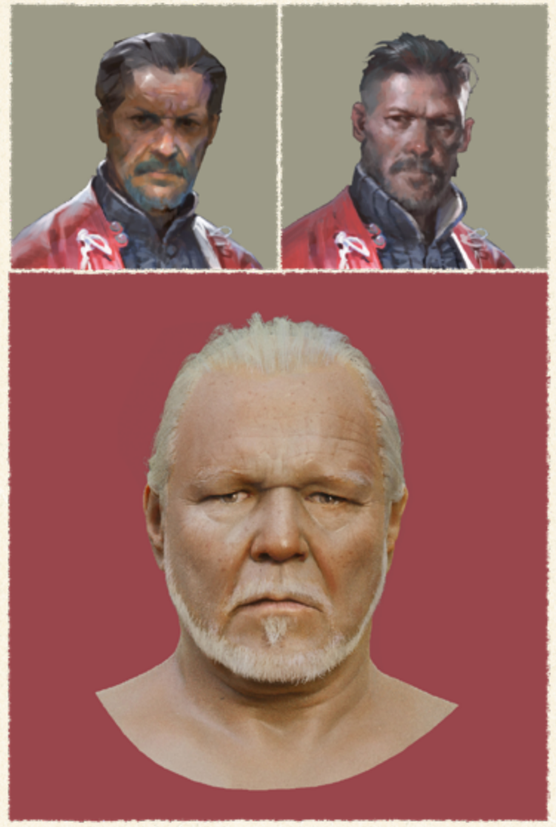
Dry Devil” of Kunstadt was a Moravian nobleman, warrior, and robber knight. In the late 14th century, his homeland became a battleground for feuding nobles, with merchants and traveling townsfolk frequently falling victim to raids and ambushes. Hynek took part in these conflicts and earned his fearsome nickname “Dry Devil”, which is also reflected in his battle-worn, gaunt face. His preference for guerrilla-style tactics, relying more on an “un-Christian” crossbow than on his knightly sword, is also reflected in his light armor, well-suited to his style of warfare.

Peter of Pisek

Peter of Pisek was a leading figure of one of the most prominent burgher families in Kuttenberg during the Luxembourg reign. He served on the town council as a senior alderman and councillor. In 1391, the highly profitable office of royal mintmaster passed into his hand, making him the first townsman of Kuttenberg to hold this position. With his newfound wealth, he became an important patron and is credited with a key role in funding the construction of the Cathedral of Corpus Christi and St. Barbara. It is believed that his contributions extended to the outer aisles of the cathedral, spaces not originally included in the church's design, where his foundations are still located today.

Otto von Bergow

Otto von Bergow was a prominent Bohemian nobleman of Thuringian-Meissen descent who held royal offices at the provincial court and served as the burgrave of Prague between 1388 and 1393. Later, as a leading member of the League of Lords, he sat on the royal council even though he openly opposed king Wenceslas IV. He also served as High Provincial Chamberlain, a position granted to him by Sigismund of Luxembourg. Just as a fine, flowing cloak conceals the armor beneath, von Bergow hides his ruthless pragmatism behind the polished façade of a wealthy and respected nobleman.



Hans Capon

Hans Capon of Pirkstein was a bohemian nobleman from the Pirkstein branch of the Lords of Leipa family. He held the estates of Rattay and Polna. In 1403, the year in which both parts of Kingdom Come: Deliverance take place, he would have been around 15 years old. That made him an ideal inspiration for the character of Henry's companion and friend. The fictional young Lord Hans Capon grows up without a father under the not-so-patient guidance of his uncle, Sir Hanush of Leipa. As a result, he often recklessly explores the world on his own in the turbulent years leading up to the Hussite Wars.

Sigismund of Luxembourg

In Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, we finally meet the Hungarian king, Sigismund of Luxembourg, whose insatiable dynastic ambition led him to bring a vast foreign army into Bohemia. He played a central role in escalating the conflict between supporters and opponents of King Wenceslas IV's rule and was responsible for the destruction of many villages and the deaths of thousands. Our inspiration came from Czech movies and visual art, as many artists have attempted to depict this Luxembourg monarch. However, most portray him at a later stage in life, primarily focusing on his role during the Hussite Wars, nearly twenty years after the events of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II take place. That's why we designed our own take on his appearance, including his clothing, hairstyle, and beard. We also wanted to make it unmistakably clear that Sigismund was no ordinary nobleman, but a man true to his royal bloodline, a master strategist, and most certainly an opponent to be treated with the utmost caution.

Fictional Characters

It's no surprise that in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, the main protagonist is once again Henry, the son of a blacksmith. His life was turned upside down by the attack on his hometown, Silver Skalitz, during which he lost both his loved ones and his home. The invading army belonged to Sigismund of Luxembourg, who was marching through Bohemia to seize power.

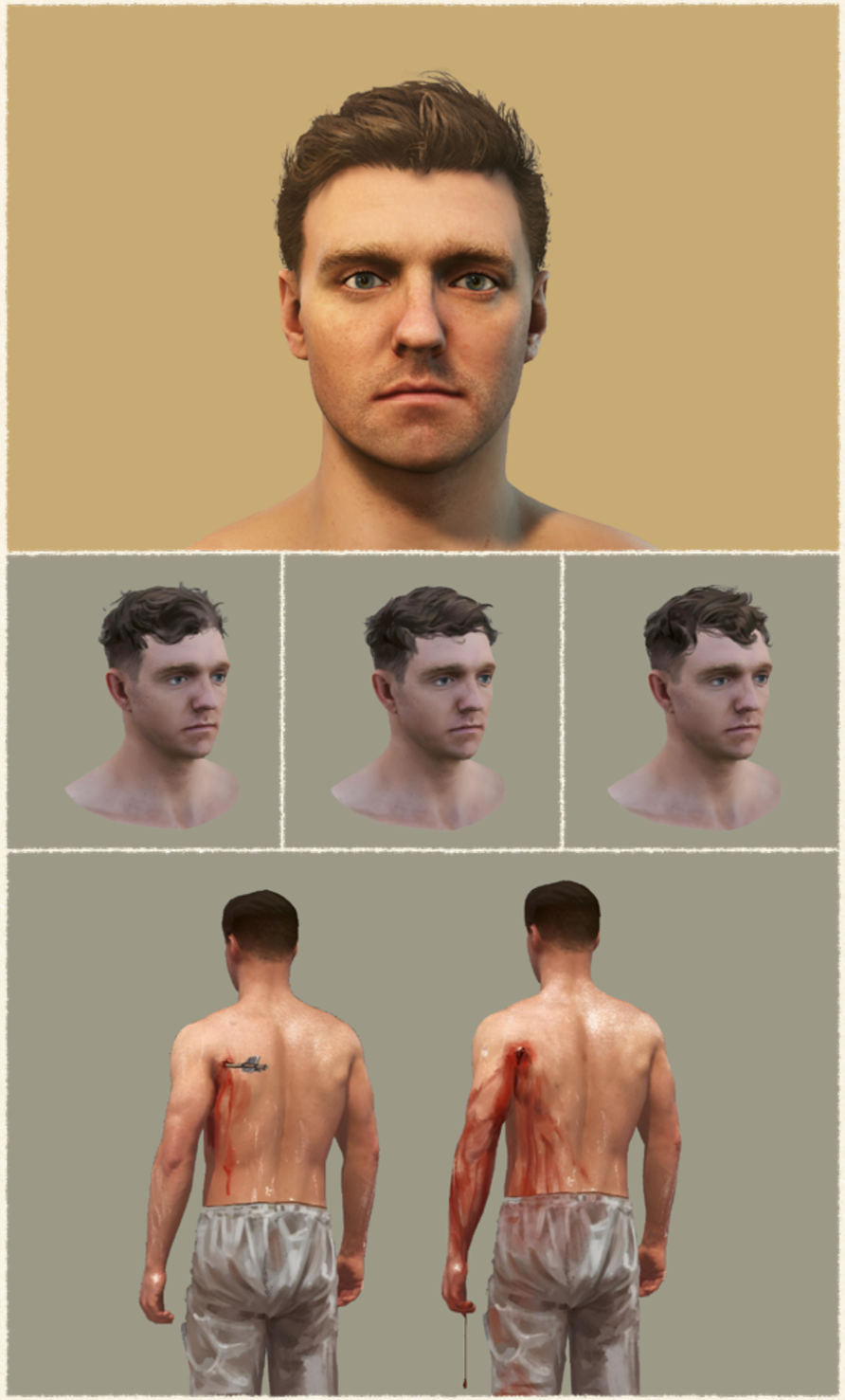
We can't say for certain whether a young man named Henry actually lived in Skalitz in 1403, but we can't rule it out either. Our goal was to portray the medieval period through a character who could have lived in the region and experienced the events recorded in historical chronicles.

We hope that experiencing the world through Henry's young eyes has helped show you the issues, cultural diversity, ideologies, and many other aspects of that era. All without prejudice.

Henry

The story of Henry, the blacksmith's son from Skalitz who discovered he was, in fact, the illegitimate son of the royal burgrave Sir Radzig Kobyla, picks up immediately after the events of the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance. In the few weeks since the burning of his home village, our hero has gone through more adventures than many valiant knights see in a lifetime. Our first task was to reflect the transformation of his character.

A key part of Henry's transformation was his new hairstyle and youthful stubble adorning his face. As the player takes on the world through Henry's eyes, they can approach problems in a variety of ways. They can become a warrior, a diplomat, or a stealthy scout, with each path supported by fitting attire. In some scenes, Henry also appears without clothes – wounded, bandaged, or even branded as a criminal. Creating all these variations took time and required precise modeling. Even seemingly trivial parts of his body like his armpits, which are visible during torture scenes, kept us up at night as we tried to make them look as best as we could.

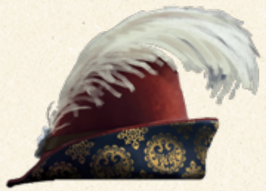


Godwin

Godwin is a debauched priest who embodies all layers of society, from peasants to soldiers, nobility, and clergy. He is both a hero and an antihero, standing between Heaven and Hell. From the very beginning of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, we knew his role in the story would grow. His character would develop, and he would bring more action into the game by becoming the second playable character. This meant we had to design a new practical combat outfit that would reflect all facets of his personality and experience. Our design team came up with the bold idea that, after a major plot twist, Godwin would have to disguise himself in the extravagant robes of an Italian papal legate, including a red cardinal's hat. To make this believable, we studied the hierarchy and function of papal envoys, as well as the differences between Italian and Bohemian fashion of that time. Only then were we able to create an authentic outfit that met the requirements of our clothing system. It was also essential to ensure it worked properly while riding on horseback.

Vauquelin Brabant

Medieval fashion at the Bohemian court, especially during the 14th and 15th centuries, was undoubtedly most heavily influenced by innovations from France. This influence was evident in richly decorated fine fabrics, new designs for tunics and cloaks, closer-fitting jupons, widening sleeves, and splendidly adorned high headwear. Bohemian nobility and the increasingly wealthy townspeople were drawn to everything “from the West,” making the wealthy foreigner Brabant a perfect opportunity for us to showcase the latest fashion trends of the time. Even the color of his garments would have, in that era, signaled both bravery and wealth. How exactly did he come by such wealth? That is another matter entirely.



Katherine

One of the most important characters in the story of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II. A woman who influences Henry's fate countless times, as well as the fate of his companions. Though she's often cast in the role of a naive maid or a playful bathhouse wench, there's much more to her. She carries courage, wisdom, and a fierce determination to survive in a time of war, which took everything she loved away from her. Although she is a fictional character, the name Katherine was not chosen at random. It's known that Jan Zizka of Trotznov, her closest companion in the game, was married twice, and by coincidence, both of his wives were named Katherine.

Adder

A Polish member of the Dry Devil's company, nicknamed Adder, is a great sabre fighter and a hot-blooded hedonist and adventurer who turns his head for every skirt. Even his padded doublet with chainmail sleeves seems to resemble an open shirt, perfectly reflecting his rakish nature. Despite all that, Adder still has moments when his other side shines through. In his own peculiar way, he can be both devout and kind-hearted. Sadly, those moments never last very long. All it takes is a pretty tavern wench walking by with a few tankards of beer.

The Legate

The role of a papal legate has been held for centuries by cardinals or bishops appointed directly by the pope. Their mission was to represent the head of the Church and enforce papal authority in the lands to which they were sent. The legate we meet in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II is a wealthy cardinal of the Roman pope, dispatched to the Kingdom of Bohemia with a Vatican military escort on a secret mission. He does not yet know that this will be his final journey. For us, this character was an opportunity to explore the shifting trends across Europe, both between nations and within the clergy's evolving role in relation to the faithful. The legate wears the most fashionable garments of his time. On the Apennine Peninsula, the cultural era began to change, drawing inspiration from antiquity.

Musa of Mali

The well-travelled scholar Musa is a fictional character. However, his origin, name, and personality are based on real people. He was primarily inspired by Mansa Musa, ruler of the Mali Empire in the early 14th century. This remarkable figure significantly contributed to the spread of Islam across North Africa and the Middle East and to the development of the city of Timbuktu, where he founded a mosque and a university both of which still stand today. Our second source of inspiration for Musa was Ibn Battuta, the Arab scholar and one of the most important travellers and cartographers of the 14th century. He spent nearly thirty years journeying through much of the known world. Musa embodies many of the positive traits of both these influential men. He is educated, multilingual, and well-travelled. However, he is still only human. He is both ambitious and not particularly brave. At first, he might come across as disillusioned with the Bohemia, but his outlook changes as he meets kind people and makes new friends.

Rosa Ruthard

Rosa Ruthard is the young daughter of a prominent burgher from Kuttenberg – Kunzlin Ruthard. While the typical image of a perfect medieval noblewoman might be that of a quiet, unopinionated girl, our writers gave Rosa a plethora of traits inherited from her father. As a result, she is headstrong and dares to challenge the men she interacts with when she is convinced of her own truth. At the same time, she remains a romantic, sensitive, and well-educated lover of books.

Istvan Toth and Erik

Istvan Toth is a Hungarian nobleman who commands a unit of Sigismund's army. In Kingdom Come: Deliverance, he ravages the area around Sasau. We portrayed him as a brutal and relentless man who will stop at nothing. However, once we learn about his painful past, we might begin to see him in a slightly different light, maybe as someone whose story mirrors that of Henry himself. His troubled past is revealed to us by the knight Erik, who was orphaned as a child and later taken under Istvan's patronage.

They make a striking pair full of contrasts. The older Istvan has long chosen his path in life, his hands are stained with the blood of innocents, and gold has become his remedy for all suffering. He wears richly adorned black garments that shimmer in the glow of fire with both majesty and menace. Erik, on the other hand, still has his whole life ahead of him. It's up to him whether he follows the same path as his mentor. His white armor forms a stark visual contrast to Istvan's black. It is an embodiment of the choice that lies before him.

Samuel

Samuel is the illegitimate son of Henry's stepfather Martin and the grandson of the Kuttenberg rabbi. As a half-Jew raised without a father, life was never easy for him. This struggle helped shape his character. He grew tougher, stronger, and always looked out for himself first, eventually rising to become the leader of the Jewish militia. He also owns The King Solomon Tavern, from where he runs his network of spies. His clothing and armor reflect the status of a young, wealthy man with a fair bit of swagger. It's only when fate brings him together with Henry that Samuel discovers someone he's always lacked in his life. Someone he can truly call a brother, even if not by blood. Someone he can finally trust and open up to.

Rabbi Jehuda

Rabbi is the head of the Jewish religious community in Kuttenberg and, in fact, its symbolic figure. He is a dignified man who, even in this medieval town, may look as if he's from another world with the way he speaks and dresses. At the same time, he plays a crucial role in the resistance against King Sigismund by helping to finance its efforts.

Medieval Fashion

Meticulous modeling has formed the foundation of our clothing system. Our goal was not only to faithfully recreate the historical dressing style, but also to support our unique layering technology for equipping characters. Each garment comes with its own parameters and limitations and must meet specific conditions to allow individual pieces to be combined. In keeping with historical reality, Henry cannot, for example, wear a coat without first donning his undergarments, nor can he throw chainmail over a thin linen shirt.

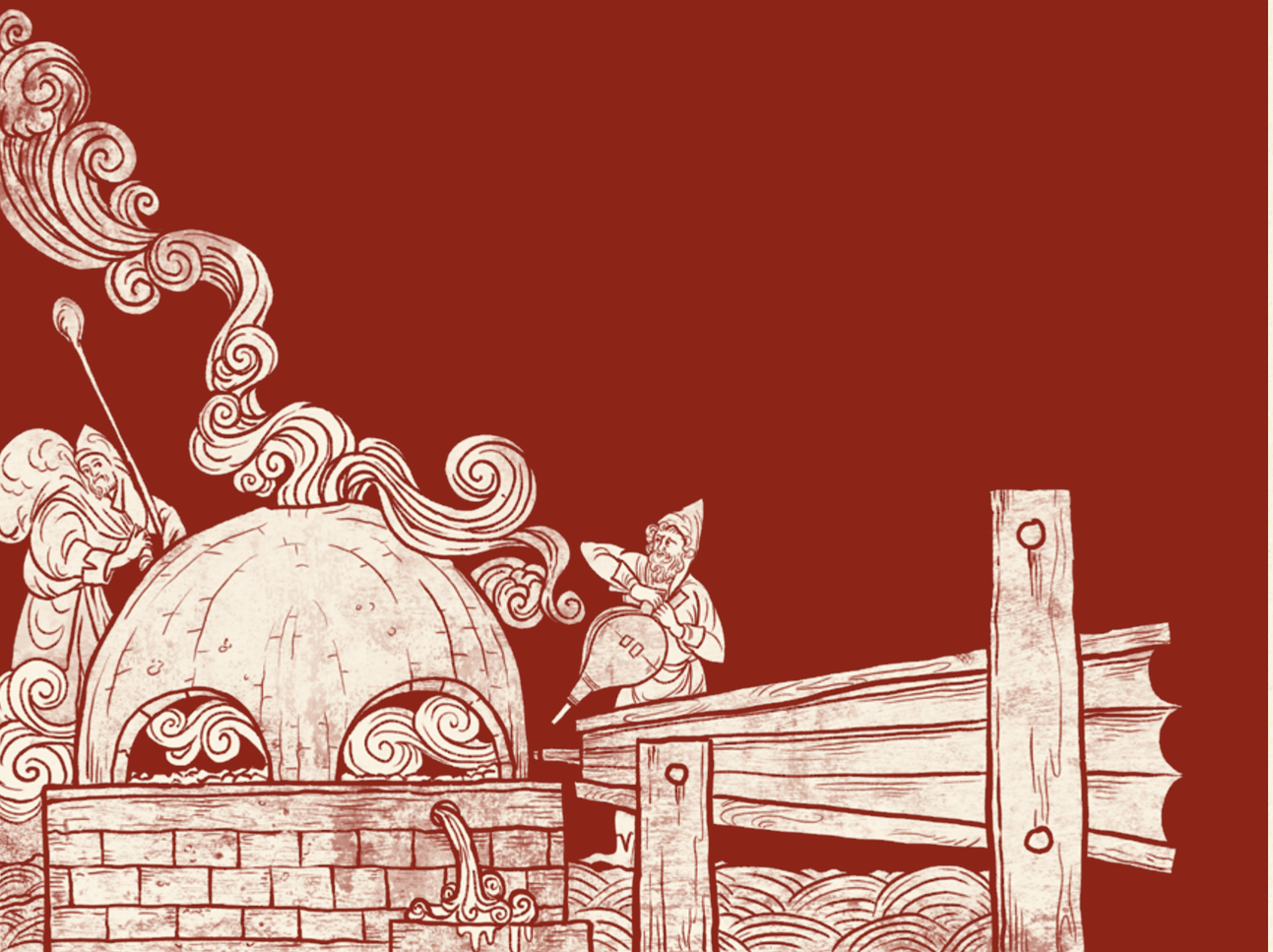
Every clothing item was based on the study of tailoring techniques, hemming styles, closures, fastenings, knitting, embroidery, and the color schemes of preserved historical fabric pieces. Peasant clothing had to be practical and suitable for year-round use. The clothes would be simple, loose-fitting, and never made to measure. The color palette was typically more modest compared to the vibrant hues of townsfolk or nobles. Representatives of these social classes could afford to own more clothing, which was custom-made and crafted from more expensive fabrics. Gold-thread embroidery, metal buttons, ornate brooches, necklaces, rings, and decorative belts were very popular.

When craftsmen or common townsmen wanted to dress up for a festival or celebration, new garments were often too costly. It was much more accessible to purchase a stylish hat, which saved them both money and the hassle of tailoring. Hats and caps made from fine felted wool, adorned with embroidery, metal brooches, or even feathers, came in countless shapes and sizes and were often the most practical yet striking accessory of a gentleman's attire. That's why we expanded the headwear options in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II. Players can of course find classic work hats, metal helmets, or simple headscarves, but those seeking a splash of flair will have plenty to choose from.

Our character modeling team was particularly drawn to the challenge of creating historically inspired hairstyles and beards. Hair was a key element in defining a character's identity. But like every other visual asset, hairstyles had to meet technical requirements to function properly in the game environment.

Hair length, for example, is easy to sketch but tricky in 3D modeling. In-game, hair has to behave convincingly in dynamic environments with changing weather, blowing wind, and active character movement. Another obstacle was ensuring the hair still appeared realistic in the chaos of battle, where blood splatters, dust swirls, smoke rises, and muddy roads spare no one. By contrast, designing women's clothing was in some ways simpler than designing men's, since due to several technical limitations, we knew players wouldn't be able to wear women's outfits. That meant we didn't have to worry about adapting cuts for both male and female bodies or about how women's clothing would mix with the male wardrobe or even armor.

Still, we had to do our detailed research. We studied how real historical clothing could be translated into our layering system, which garments were practical and suitable for work, and when women had to put up with discomfort just to make an impression in society. We increased the variability of dresses not only through patterns and color schemes but also through fine details like jewelry, rosaries, buttons, or delicate embroidered trim. One of our fashion specialists' favorite tasks was implementing the mi-parti technique. It is a style in which garments are symmetrically divided, with each half featuring a different color. This design gave dresses not only elegance but also a distinct personality.



Behind the Curtain

Everything you've seen so far – from the crafted landscapes and bustling cities to the characters brought to life – was part of the vast world of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II. However, some artworks and visual creations go beyond the confines of the game world. They spill over into reality, or rather they reach out from the game to interact directly with you, our brave players.

Whether you know the following images from your monitor or printed posters, their origins don't lie hidden in the annals of history, but behind the curtain of our studio. Allow us to pull back that curtain for a moment and reveal one final piece of Warhorse Studios' behind-the-scenes story.

VII

User Interface

From a torn tunic to the highest castle tower, everything in Kingdom Come: Deliverance II had to reflect the image of the late Middle Ages we set out to portray. That same philosophy extended to the game's entire user interface. Our UI vision was inspired by classic RPGs and their charming use of skeuomorphism - the faithful imitation of materials, volume, and shadow.

One of the key pillars of development was building upon the foundation laid by the first game and pushing further. In our case, this meant stepping away from the 2D interface and embracing 3D. We drew inspiration from Gothic altarpieces and miniatures from tabletop role-playing games.

Those beloved little figures we used to paint and model late into the night, just to be blown up by a well-placed fireball, became the stylistic blueprint for our inventory icons. We didn't want the items to look like scaled-down 3D models of in-game objects, but rather like charming miniatures with exaggerated proportions that had spilled into Henry's satchel. This playful concept soon evolved into the endless toil of several team members, who turned it into over 3,000 unique icons within a year.

Henry gains new abilities throughout the game, just like a pilgrim collects travel badges on their journey. We took the golden perk icons from the first title and reimagined them in full 3D. Each one was modeled after real medieval badges and lovingly tailored to match its respective perk.

Transitioning from a 2D to a 3D user interface felt like taking a giant leap forward. We designed the new „apse“, as we nicknamed the menu panel, to function like a Gothic altar. A grand, quiet place where players could prepare for the next adventure.

It gradually grew into a richly detailed environment filled with light and shadow, containing sections for the player, map, codex, quest log, and more. During testing, however, our valiant QA team pointed out that the camera motion was making testers queasy - motion sickness isn‘t very medieval.

The new lockpicking interface is both an improvement and a nod to the abstract design of the original. We enhanced the visual elements to reflect the type and quality of the lock and its location. Easier locks now include helpful “notches” that guide the cursor. The tougher the lock, the fewer hints it offers.

Naturally, even the toughest lock might show up on a long-forgotten chest deep in a collapsed mine. For those, we created rusted variants for every difficulty tier. Nothing lasts forever. Not even the king’s reign or the lock on his treasury.

Open-world games carry a special magic in uncovering the most remote corners of the map, which is something we wanted to emphasize. Not all village coats of arms in the game are historically accurate or reflect authentic medieval heraldic usage, but we did our best to stay as close as possible to the historical sources available. As a small reward for exploration, each important location in both the Troskowitz and Kuttenberg regions grants the player a unique village emblem upon discovery. For each of the 24 locations, we tried to find any historical references to symbols that might be associated with them. In most cases, however, we had to create entirely new emblems that would support their narrative role in the game.

The depiction of merry skeletons escorting each soul to the afterlife is a classic motif of the late Middle Ages, known as “Totentanz,” “Danse Macabre,” or, in Czech, Tanec smrti (the “Dance of Death”). We expanded on the skeletons introduced in the first game, adding new forms depending on the circumstances under which Henry meets his end, whether in a famous battle, a deadly fall, from spoiled food, bleeding out, or an unfortunate accident involving gunpowder and a little too much alcohol.

The Codex is an in-game compilation of factual knowledge about various aspects of medieval life, presented in a way that allows players to learn something new as they play. We chose to give it the form of a book's pages, and since no medieval manuscript would be complete without beautiful illuminations, we made sure to include those as well. We also created unique ornaments and illustrations to accompany the text. Like a manuscript from a monastic scriptorium, the Codex gradually grew into a rich collection of everything we managed to include in the game, along with things we chose to slightly alter, or didn't get the chance to mention in Henry's story.

Alchemy is as close to fantasy as Kingdom Come dares to tread thanks to its gifts - various potions and poisons. While herbal remedies did have medicinal value, they were also steeped in mystery and superstition. Our alchemy system reflects that blend of science and myth. Recipes appear as cryptic notes scribbled by mad scholars or whispered to scribes by forest witches. Ingredients are recorded with arcane symbols and faded sketches as if pulled from an alchemist's lost grimoire.

Rubices N-Y recentes
comfrey accipimus, quas
mundamus, in minutas
partes et calorem in
vel axungiae incisas, vel
oleum vegetabile omnibus
qualitas. Ante ferverit
punctum averte et in
pinguedine usque in
crastinum relinque.

3x
1x
I.
II.
III.
1x
IV.
V.
2x
VI.

2x
1x
I.
II.
3x
III.
IV.
V.
2x

1x
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I.
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2x
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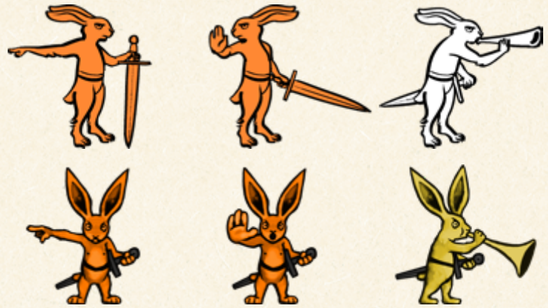
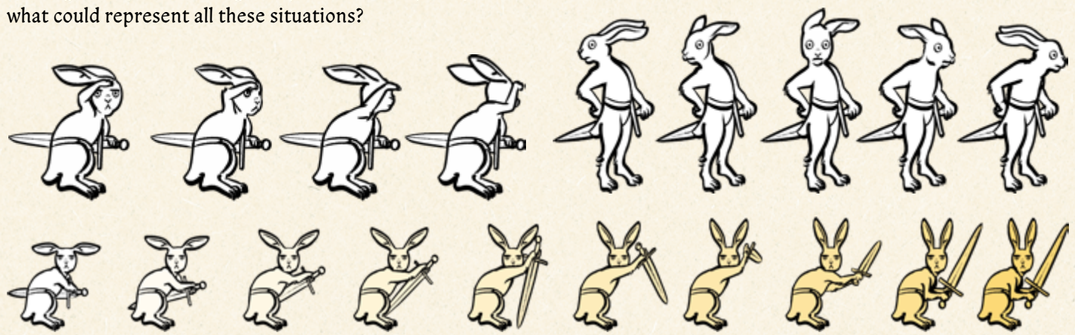
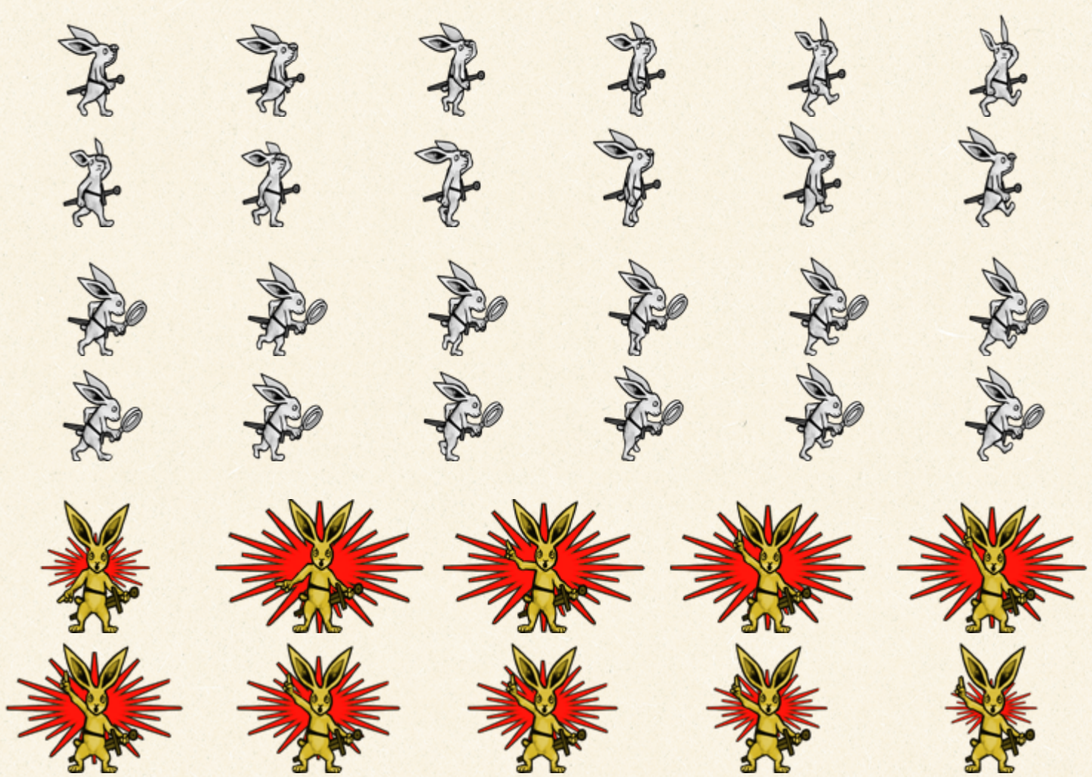
IV.

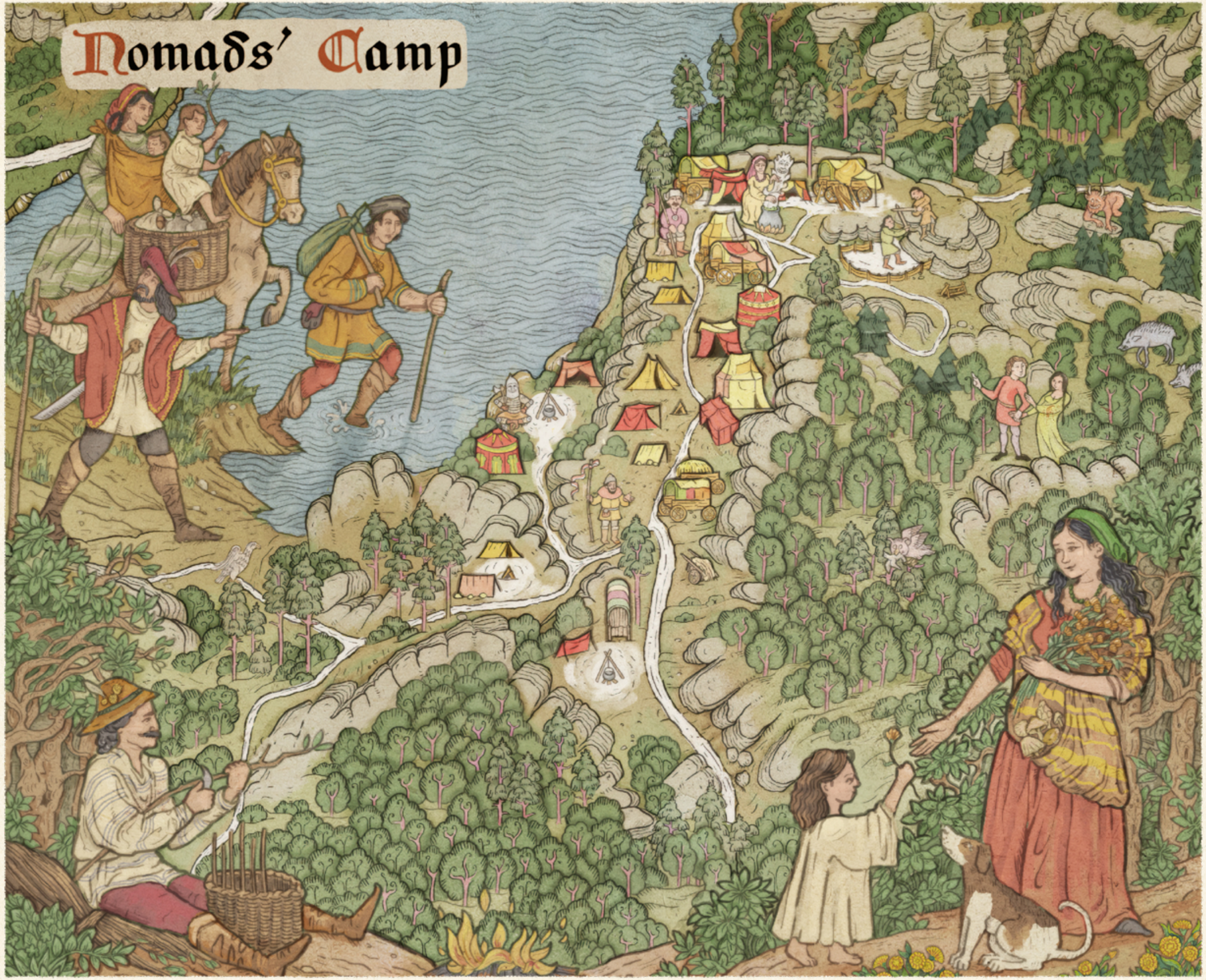
Compared to the first game, Kingdom Come: Deliverance II required a significant expansion of the user interface to reflect the wide range of possible interactions between the player and other characters. As development progressed, these needs grew and eventually lead to a whole array of situations from active combat, through being searched for, to being actively pursued. The challenge lay in choosing the right icon to represent these various states. A soldier? No. After all, the player doesn't only fight soldiers. A guard? But not every thief is pursued by guards. Sometimes it's just a housewife chasing Henry for stealing her pies from the pantry. So what could represent all these situations?





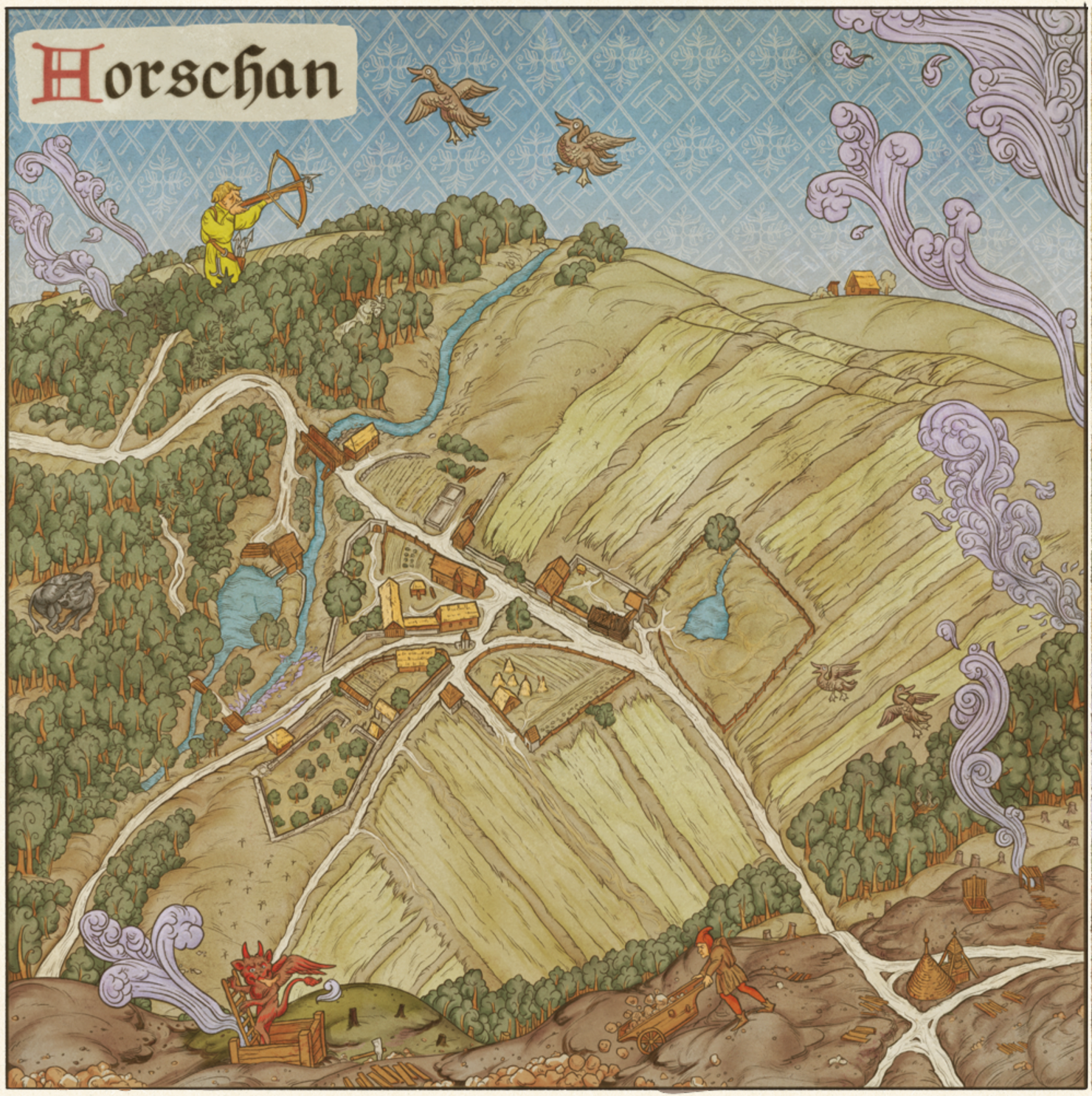


As often happens, the answer was found in medieval manuscripts. Specifically, in the margins and doodles drawn by medieval illuminators for our delight centuries later. But even our bunny went through many stages of evolution. At one point, the entire team worked with a prototype of an egg-shaped bunny waving at developers, pointing fingers, calling for help, or brandishing a sword so we could clearly observe each state. The pointing and waving stayed, but it's a real bunny that accompanies Henry on his adventures.



Each new location hides unique stories we wanted to depict in its detailed map. Whether it's a folk tale, fragments of Henry's adventure, or a playful surprise, players may find hidden thieves, lazy cats, or dancing rabbits tucked among the trees. It's an homage to the mischievous medieval illuminators.

Apolena


Horschan

Raborsch

Zhelejov

Visual Identity

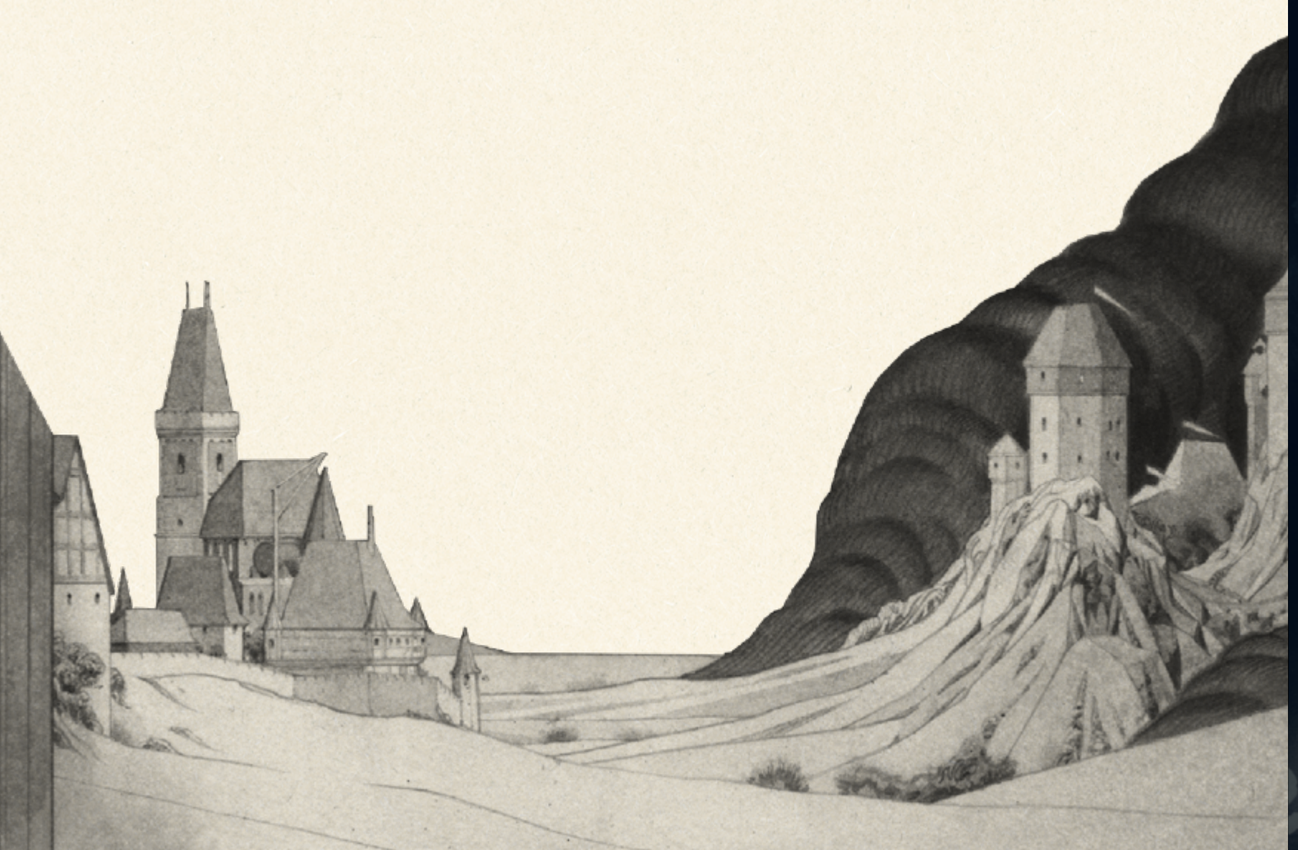
In public spaces, on social media, in stores, or while watching videos – wherever you look, you'll find logos, illustrations, and all kinds of promotional artwork. These are often part of broader systems that represent brands, products, or projects. They form part of a visual identity. Our visual identity aims to create a unified visual style that is easily recognizable and simultaneously corresponds to the values and atmosphere of our game.

Video games are unique in this way. They combine many art forms, such as music, film, literature, and visual design. The bigger and more complex the game, the more elements have to be unified under one banner, and the harder it becomes to achieve a cohesive result.

It's common for a game's logo and cover illustration to go through a lengthy iterative process, and Kingdom Come: Deliverance II was no exception. It took us three years and many returns to the drawing board to reach their final form. The artwork and logo you see on the final cover went through several creative phases. Artists, both from our studio and beyond, both Czech and international, took part in shaping it. As the game's concept evolved, so did our understanding of what we wanted for the visuals to communicate. In hindsight, it's hard to say which designs are better or worse. We love them all and are proud to share them, even if only here.

The first concept was inspired by Henry's transformation. In the first game, he rose from a peasant to a knight. Now, he shifts from a knight to a hero. Medieval artists had a clear visual language for portraying legends and transcendence. They used the rarest and most expensive materials of the time. That's why the final illustration echoes the aesthetics of Christian iconography, combining gold and ultramarine blue, a pigment made from the semi-precious stone lapis lazuli. The intricate decorative framing was also inspired by richly illuminated Bibles from the very era in which the game is set. Yet at the heart of it all is the hero himself. Unlike the first cover, where Henry bowed his head in humility, the new pose is majestic. He is ready to fight. We explored sword stances based on historical swordsmanship, but in the end, we opted for a looser approach that favored composition over realism.

The intentions outlined in the first stage of the cover illustration creation remained intact through to the final version, which was reinterpreted by Brazilian artist João Ruas, best known for his cover art for the Fables comic book series. João had been an inspiration to our team since the first Kingdom Come: Deliverance, so it was an honor to collaborate with him on the sequel. In his version, the color scheme from the first game remains, but the style shifted towards the flatter, more stylized expression. Henry is no longer alone – he's part of a band of warriors who now take center stage.



The theme of the final illustration was a battle scene. Henry leads a group of armed companions into the fray. Unlike the previous more collage-like concepts, this scene unfolds in a coherent space and consistent scale. It's no accident if it reminds you of illustrated covers of classic American fantasy novels, or of 19th-century European battle paintings. Both served as rich sources of inspiration. Alongside raised swords and falling foes, we also aimed to feature the landscape for the first time. Much of the game takes place in the forests beneath Trosky Castle and in the open countryside around Kuttenberg. In the background, you'll spot recognizable landmarks from both regions.

Dear reader, you are holding the last page of a book that took more than a thousand years to write. That's how much effort it took to develop Kingdom Come: Deliverance II, of which this book is but the latest act.

It would be hard for anyone to stay focused on such a prodigious project without trusting it has some overarching purpose. Sales numbers and review scores notwithstanding, our goal was and is to create a world that will allow you to experience something unique, exceptional. Whether it worked or not, you now know better than us, but I'd like to believe that you liked your tryst with the world of Kingdom Come: Deliverance II. Regardless of why you came here – whether to escape, to explore, or to excel – I hope that you found what you were looking for.

Dear reader, we have travelled together for the longest time. If you really played our game and are not just idly flipping through this volume in some bookstore, then you know us better than many of our friends and family.

We don't know your name or face, but with any luck, you enjoyed our journey as much as we did. And just like us, you learned something new – not only about the village of Troskowitz, A.D. 1403, but also about yourself.

Dear reader, this is where our trek ends: the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces fade in the distance, the clamour of the medieval city falls behind, horses turn into cars, dirt roads into freeways. Only the memory remains – and this book. Should you ever wish to return, just let the pages unfold!

Martin Klíma
Executive Producer

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

(The Tempest, Act IV)

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